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## Introduction

The third and final conference on "The Impact of Indian History on the Teaching of American History" was held at the University of California-Los Angeles, September 24-27, 1986. Earlier conferences took place at the Newberry Library in Chicago in 1984 and the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. in 1985. The series was organized by the D'Arcy McNickle Center for the History of the American Indian and supported by funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Lloyd A. Fry Foundation.

Seventy-five participants, selected primarily from the western United States, gathered at the UCLA Faculty Center to hear presentations on important issues in Indian history and to consider ways of incorporating emerging scholarship into existing courses of instruction. Gary Nash of UCLA and Peter Iverson of Arizona State University, West Campus, acted as commentators on the major papers, providing suggestions for classroom application, and also led workshop discussions in which conference participants addressed the problems of devising survey courses that effectively integrate Indian history in the teaching of American history.

This publication, Volume 5 in the McNickle Center's Occasional Papers in Curriculum Series, reproduces papers and commentary from the major sessions and brief reports from the workshops. It is being distributed to all conference participants in the hope that the contents will be circulated among other teachers of American history survey courses. The papers are copyrighted in their present form,

although a final selection of papers from all three conferences is due to be published as a Reader in American Indian History by Harlan Davidson. Additional copies of the present volume can be obtained by writing to: The D'Arcy McNickle Center for the History of the American Indian, The Newberry Library, 60 West Walton Street, Chicago, Illinois 60610.

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Native Americans and the American Revolution:  
Historic Stories and Shifting Frontier Conflict

by

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For many Americans, the story of who they are winds back to the Revolution. It matters how we think of that event and how we see ourselves and others in the tableau. At the same time, history books tend to discount the power of that mythology and to turn the human meaning of the event into dull facts. Rather than appearing as some kind of collective creation, the Revolution is too often reduced to the product of disembodied forces, inevitable outcomes, and foreordained action. In response to that rather grey vision, impatient students have called for a new story, one that includes women and workingpeople and that allows for human heroism. They want a story that conveys some of the passion of the age; they want history "from the bottom up!"

To write a history of the Revolution "from the bottom up" requires us to take seriously the experience and perspective of American Indians. The first aspect of the Indian side of the revolution--their contribution--is easily managed. Most Indians sided with the British and fought alongside their allies in New England, New York, Pennsylvania, the Carolinas and the Great Lakes. This is the story of the Indians in the Revolution.

The Indian perspective on the Revolution is a second--and far more important--aspect of the story. This perspective tells us about Indians and the Revolution. To tell that tale we should begin with a single question: what can the Indians--the outsiders--teach us about the character of the Revolution? An explanation does not come easily.

An overview of the American Indian and the Revolution should begin with a concern for story. For years historians have struggled to include Native Americans--people who were thought of as preliterate and therefore ahistorical--in the great American history of progress. The struggle has been marked by anguish: without written documents Native American history remained mired in sentiment and in myth, and Indian people themselves stood by chiding historians that they had gotten the story wrong. This should not surprise us, for Indians were not insiders to the Revolution. They were excluded by the principal actors and they rejected involvement themselves. Except for interaction in trade and conflict over land, Native and EuroAmericans had few common experiences. The war derived from and affected people who were usually far from the tribal world.

But the Revolutionary era inspired acts of storytelling which addressed the cultural divisions of Indians and whites and set the course of relations between the races far into the future. Whether spoken by Native or EuroAmericans, the stories tried to explain why brutality was the order of the day. The world was coming apart and all the old stories had to be revised.

The era of the Revolution confronted both cultures with a new age. Behind an array of shifting economic, diplomatic, and military events lay a mythic urgency. Natives and EuroAmericans alike plumbed events seeking answers to new, fundamental questions: Who are we? Why are we?

#### Imperial Story: 1760-1774

Natives and EuroAmericans had once met as equals, but that equality ended in the 1750s. Since all the British colonies pressured the tribes to surrender their lands, Native Americans had had to favor the French during the Great War for Empire. The Iroquois Confederacy epitomized the situation Indians faced. The English pushed the Six Nations to abandon their fifty year policy of neutrality in Euramerican conflicts--a policy that had been a very successful story of powerful aloofness by which the Iroquois played the French against the English. During the Seven Year War, the Confederacy was driven one way and then another. To placate English allies, the Iroquois declared war on New France. They also hedged their bets by failing to march against Canada. Their indecision proved costly. Colonial officials attributed the tribes' ambivalence to Indian untrustworthiness. Indian duplicity was always the story whenever the tribes followed their own interests.

With the defeat of the French, trust was ever harder to come by. The Iroquois Covenant Chain--an alliance system linking the English colonies with the Indian tribes of the Old Northwest--began to come

apart. More seriously, the Six Nations' Confederacy began to collapse from within. It took forty years for this external and internal disintegration to occur, a length of time which measures the complex challenge Indians faced in coming to grips with growing American power. To be successful, Native Americans faced two related tasks. First, they needed to achieve intertribal unity to counter that favorite Euramerican strategy: divide and rule. And second, each tribal group needed to revitalize the core kinship values which shaped their community life.

The conquest of Canada in 1763 made the achievement of these goals all the more urgent. Unfortunately, an old story which had been long in the making came immediately into play. The English colonies had fought the Catholic French and their Indian allies since the end of the seventeenth century. By the 1760s, the English had little sympathy for Indian 'savages' who had fought by the side of the equally 'savage' French. Such sentiments reflected something more than bald racism: religious dogma, intellectual presupposition, and bitter experience had taught the English to stand on guard. Ideologically, then, the 1760s opened with little hope for cross-cultural communication.

Other stories had their impact, particularly the contrasting meanings Native and Euramericans placed on exchange. Gifts played a prominent role in Indian-White relations because for Native Americans, symbolically charged acts of sharing structured positive social relations. In contrast, colonials limited the meaning of exchange to

the merely economic: profit considerations prevailed. For example, they often thought of presents given to Indian allies as a form of bribery. That was one story that seemed to work. Gifts did win friends. So, gifts were given for as long as Euramericans needed Indian furs, land, and military assistance. Visiting Indian dignitaries were dined, and especially wined, and eventually sent on their way sporting new finery: shirts, jackets, and hats. Moreover, colonial or British officials paid the bills for food and entertainment at the public conferences which frequently drew hundreds of Indian people. As it turned out, Indian relations became more expensive in the 1760s, just as Euramericans felt more powerful, and official largesse turned into resentment.

Euramericans' frustration at the cost of Indian relations hid from them the Indian story about the significance of exchange. The gifts that sweetened discourse, that opened and closed councils, and that expressed enduring friendship, had a religious value in Indian society. One's closest kin did not give presents; they shared with no thought of reward. Others, including distant relatives and strangers seeking to express good faith, gave gifts. Expectation of profit may well have been a part of such reciprocal exchange, but the achievement of something like kinship solidarity was the real goal of the forms Indians imposed on commercial give and take.

Still, colonial governors, imperial administrators, and American officials alike groaned under the cost of the conversation. There were always expenses that seemed more important. As a result the

major misunderstandings endured. In the 1760s British officials contributed substantially toward alienating the tribes by slashing the Indian budget. Funding rose dramatically during the War for Independence, when much was at stake. After the war, American officials cut expenditures and so ensured the survival of tribal resentment. To the Indians, every refusal to honor Native American exchange values was an expression of disdain.

In 1763 budgetary retrenchment and the heritage of years of mutual animosity fused into violence. In the first place, the tribes were alarmed that France had ceded their lands to England. Secondly, the British had taken a hard line against what they saw as the "conquered" allies of the French. Major General Jeffrey Amherst, not one to truck with subordinates, made British policy clear. "It is not my intention," he declared, "ever to attempt to gain the friendship of Indians by presents." Moreover, he limited trade to a few posts to profit the English without regard for Indian cost, convenience, or sentiment.

English dominance was not to come easily. When the peoples of the Old Northwest struck back in 1763, they effectively communicated, in the language of power that the English understood, the necessity for both economic and diplomatic reciprocity. The British government compared the cost of war to trading profits and trade won. But not for long. In the early 1760s, British officials had moved to control commerce from London in order to protect the tribes from abusive traders. But before long, control of the trade was returned to the

individual colonies, and it fell into the hands of those who served private rather than public interests.

Imperial authorities in London claimed general powers over Indian-White relations but in practice they abdicated their role to particular colonial merchants. Expediency became the main theme of British colonial Indian policy. For example, when faced with effective Indian opposition, the British shifted their story that the tribes had been conquered along with the French. To win peace (and also to streamline imperial direction of unruly colonial governments), the Proclamation of 1763 provided for the erection of a boundary between Indian and colonial lands.

The British even proceeded in good faith and for a time abated Indian resentments. In the South, the Cherokee led the way in surveying the border, hoping that it would at last control grasping frontiersmen. The Cherokee knew that the boundary was vital. In 1760, they had attacked squatters the southern colonies would not, and could not, control. The result had been a bitter war. Cherokee towns were devastated and the tribe sued for peace even though the treaty confiscated lands under that classic story called reparations.

By the mid 1760s, then, several stories were shaping Indian-White relations in a way that would profoundly affect the tribes' reaction to the War for Independence. At every point on the frontier--at trading posts, forts, missions, and on borders breeched by settlers--Indians rejected the grand story of Euramerican superiority.

Native Americans countered with stories of their own, insisting on their own humanity, political independence, and territorial integrity. The Indian war of 1763 drove this message home.

The Indian defeat in the 1763 war communicated that the British might do as they wished because the tribes could not cooperate. Their disunity had its source in two related mythic orientations. The first was the story of tribalism itself, especially the religious conviction that solidarity was possible only between kinfolk. The second story derived from a major effort to deal with the divisive impact tribalism had on Native Americans' ability to achieve peace between and within the tribes. The Six Nations Confederacy had not only abolished the law of revenge, (and thereby extended the bonds of kinship beyond the clan), it had also developed a new metaphor of solidarity--The Great Tree of Peace--a powerful symbol of diplomatic dominance over its Indian and Euramerican neighbors. By the mid-eighteenth century, the confederacy had come to claim that its tree (and its sovereignty) extended over the tribes and lands of the entire Old Northwest. In the 1760s it suited British interests to recognize and manipulate these Iroquois pretensions.

The devastating result of this story of an Iroquois empire can best be seen in the first Treaty of Fort Stanwix of 1768, an agreement that set the scene for the revolution itself. The British used the treaty to establish the northern boundary between Indian and colonial lands. As in every treaty which negotiated the new border, the tribes were required to surrender more land. Even in the South, these land

cessions fueled resentment but, as in the case of the Creek and the Cherokee, the tribes had usually been able to see some value in compromise. In the North, the situation was different because Iroquois claims of territorial sovereignty effectively disenfranchised the Shawnee and the other tribes of the Old Northwest. When the Six Nations ceded all land south of the Ohio and the Susquehanna rivers (opening Kentucky, West Virginia, and western Pennsylvania to settlement) they lost face with their former Indian allies. A new confederacy arose beyond the Ohio determined to resist not only British manipulation, but also the interference of the Six Nations. Thus, the principle of divide and rule had again been used to further colonial interests.

The boundary line negotiated at Fort Stanwix was an illusion, the real effect of a story about centralized British and Iroquois authority that simply was not so. Settlers immediately swarmed beyond the Ohio with utter disregard for Indian rights. Worse, Delaware and Shawnee people who refused to abandon their homes found themselves facing racist frontiersmen who were now hostile neighbors. These rowdy settlers felt free to deal with Indians as they pleased. By 1774 government itself was breaking down throughout the American colonies. In Virginia such tensions produced a bloody frontier conflict, Lord Dunmore's War, as Indians moved to defend themselves against frontiersmen who were unwilling to discriminate between friendly and hostile Indians. The same situation prevailed all along the frontier: entirely apart from the growing American-British quarrel, Creeks, Cherokees, Delawares, Iroquois, Penobscots, and

Passamaquoddy faced the prospect of war since neither the British nor colonial authorities seemed capable of protecting their lands. The 1770s were years of such dramatic confrontation between England and America that everyone overlooked these dangerous local disagreements. Americans and British expected Native Americans to remain neutral, but did not examine the effect of what they asked.

#### Revolution: The Story of Conquest

Because the Patriots failed to comprehend Indians' need to protect themselves from individual American citizens, they constructed an Indian policy on false premises. These erroneous principles were established in the official United States' story about Indian involvement in the Revolutionary War. As expressed in treaties, laws, and executive proclamations, the story was simple, having only two themes. First, Native Americans had proven themselves incapable of friendship. They had waged an unprovoked war against the United States. And second, since they had sided with the British, the tribes were conquered when Great Britain admitted defeat. It followed, therefore, that Indians had lost ownership of their lands. In other words, the United States contended that it had waged a "just war"; the new government could call upon international law and the doctrine of conquest to further buttress its claims. It is worth comparing this story with the facts of Indian participation in the War for Independence. The official story forgot that the war had many complex causes and that the outcome was not nearly as simple as conquest theory would have it.

In the Northeast, the Penobscot and Passamaquoddy suffered because they supported the American cause. Having survived a century of warfare with the English of Massachusetts, the two peoples aligned with their old enemies in order to ingratiate themselves. Both tribes, in fact, obtained written guarantees protecting their land from further encroachments in exchange for their support. During the war, the Indians' assistance was appreciated. Afterwards, Massachusetts returned to its old tactics.

Despite the fact that individuals were legally barred from settling on Indian land, Massachusetts looked the other way. Dispossession proceeded apace. Then, as the Penobscot and Passamaquoddy found themselves in direct economic competition with English squatters, government commissioners offered them a new, protected reserve. In actual defiance of laws requiring Federal participation in land transactions, Massachusetts pushed the two peoples into treaties which dispossessed them against their will. The conquest story didn't fit the Penobscot and Passamaquoddy, but it was applied anyway.

In the South we find variations on these themes. Despite British promises and the enthusiastic endorsement of the Cherokee, the boundary established in the 1760s fell before settlers and traders. John Stuart, the British Indian Superintendent, used the resulting Cherokee resentment to animate them against the American cause. Still, the Cherokee followed their own interests. They concluded in 1776 that further protests to either the British or colonial

governments were futile. Speaking a new language, the tribe attacked the two newest white settlements. This action flouted the British request that the Cherokee remain neutral. Nevertheless, southern governments interpreted the attack as a British plot. Instead of discussing the real issue of territorial encroachment, colonial military forces set out to teach the Cherokee a lesson. Militiamen attacked and burned Cherokee villages across the tribe's vast lands. Witnessing these harrowing events, and richly benefiting from British trade, most Creeks remained quiet on the sidelines. Indeed, except for a few Cherokee warriors who continued to resist individual settlements, most southern Indians remained neutral. After the war, the Cherokee lost half of their remaining lands, and even the Creeks accepted a new boundary.

The conquest story was directly applied against the Six Nations and their supposed allies in the Old Northwest. Here again, the story failed to mesh with the facts. Two of the Six Nations (the Oneida and Tuscarora) not only sided with the United States, they also paid a stiff price when the other members of the Confederacy attacked them as traitors. Moreover, despite promises that Oneida and Tuscarora lands would be protected, it was only a short time after the war before they too were dispossessed.

The struggle for land was so intense in the Old Northwest that it would have been self-destructive for Indians to side with the patriots, an option Americans rarely considered. The Iroquois understood that it would be disastrous to side with Great Britain.

The Confederacy therefore resurrected the old play-off policy and told the new American government that the Six Nations would remain neutral. It also stipulated that its promise hinged on several conditions, all of which were soon violated. American forces engaged the British on Iroquois soil, patriots attempted to arrest the Mohawk ally, Sir John Johnson, and forced other Loyalist friends to flee. Worse, the government did not examine long-standing Mohawk complaints that settlers were encroaching on their lands. These American refusals to meet the Iroquois half-way demonstrate that the first theme of the conquest story, Indian perfidy, was not true. The Confederacy did its part in trying to keep the peace, but no government succeeded in reining in the advancing settlers.

The conquest story also directed the Confederacy's actual wartime activity. Although the British provided much needed goods and war material, everyday strategy remained in Iroquois hands. Waging traditional war, the confederacy succeeded in laying waste a vast area of New York, Pennsylvania, and Virginia. Since these were agricultural regions on which Revolutionary forces depended, the Iroquois thus provided themselves a formidable force. Retaliating American armies inflicted comparable losses on confederacy towns, but failed to dampen Iroquoian resistance. When Great Britain made peace the Iroquois were ready to fight on. The Confederacy considered itself undefeated.

The conquest story failed to account for either the causes or the course of the Indian side of the Revolutionary War. The story also

made it necessary for the new United States to fight the tribes. The heritage of the Revolution produced such a clamor for land that the Federal government found itself committed to the proposition that Native Americans were subjects who held their land only on sufferance. In the Old Northwest, at least, Native Americans acted to make clear their rejection of this idea. Armies under Generals Harmar and St. Clair met the assembled tribesmen and were soundly defeated in 1790 and 1791. The latter encounter cost the Americans 647 lives, more than any other Indian battle in its history including the celebrated Custer massacre of 1876. Shocked, the United States intensified its efforts and, in the process learned an important lesson: war was more costly than diplomacy.

The conquest story had another result: Americans soon transformed their deep seated contempt for Indian people into a story of superiority and inferiority. Thomas Jefferson, for a single example, admitted that Native Americans were people. He added, however, that they were less developed, and more backward than advanced Europeans. Thus, the President was equipped with a linguistic tool for dealing with headstrong Native Americans who needed restraint. Having found it too expensive to enforce its will, the Federal government declared itself a father with ultimate disciplinary authority. Paternalism turned out to be the ultimate story for eroding Native American independence.

## Religious Revitalization: An Indian Story

For people of the Revolutionary era, brutal realities demanded effective action. As we have seen, those actions were organized around new stories which not only justified policy, but also shaped it. The new stories swept away earlier beliefs in the possibility of constructive relations between Native and Euramericans. The old stories were now thought to be false. Native Americans apparently were doomed to dispossession and destruction. Seen in the light of historical facts (facts which fit the "stories"), the era of the American Revolution epitomizes the passive victimhood of Indians in every age.

There is another side to this story. If, as many have held, the history of Indian-White relations has been shaped by Federal paternalism, we should recognize that this was not a father who knew best. Rather, we must conclude that this was a father who killed--sometimes by neglect and sometimes with righteous fury. The image is uncomfortable but it helps us to understand better the side of the Revolution which eludes our understanding of the apparent facts. The very image of the Great White Father often hides his habit of using power with little qualm of conscience.

In actuality, both the facts of the American Revolution, and the paternal symbols in which they are often expressed, hide another element of the story: from their own point-of-view, Native Americans never accepted the role of mere victim. Before, during, and after the

American Revolution, Native Americans took responsibility for defining themselves in ways that made sense to them. And, in achieving both success and failure in that struggle for identity, native peoples have a good deal to teach us about the social dynamics of the Revolution itself.

Native American failure stemmed from their inability to effectively unite--a failing that rested partly on their economic dependence and partly on their tribal traditions. Such problems also affected the Revolutionary effort: economic immaturity and states' rights troubled both the American confederation and the new republic. As it turned out, republicanism was achieved at the cost of some personal and political freedoms, a price that Native Americans largely refused to pay. Thus Natives and Euramericans shared a similar vision of unity, but they sought to achieve it in entirely different ways.

For Indians, the era of the Revolution was sandwiched between two acts of prophecy. In the early 1760s, Neolin, a Delaware prophet, called the nations of the Old Northwest to revitalize themselves. The 1790s witnessed a number of such passionate individuals, the most prominent of which, Handsome Lake, led the way in reshaping Iroquois tradition and culture. In both the short and the long term, these religious movements were more important to tribal survival than the military events of the war.

Grounded in tradition as they were, prophetic stories became historic forces. They called the people themselves to renewal,

reminding them that responsible action effectively countered victimhood. The Iroquois say that whenever the people find themselves up against the wall, a prophet will come forth to help them. Oral tradition trained Indian people to listen attentively to the stories such prophets related. They did not always heed the prophet, but when they did revolutionary results were possible.

The Delaware prophet was neither the first nor the last religious leader who attempted to save disintegrating tribes with a new vision. But Neolin stands out for three reasons. First, Neolin's message was a syncretism of Indian and Christian teachings mixed to speak to the crisis of the 1760s. Second, unlike the old, traditional prophets, Neolin attempted to unite religiously several independent Indian nations. Thirdly, Neolin's teachings ideologically fueled the Indian war of 1763.

Native Americans of the Old Northwest had always believed in a supreme God who created and ruled the world. But this God was also remote from everyday affairs. When the Creator spoke to Neolin, it became clear that the Christ of the missionaries and the Indian God were one and the same. Like Christ, the Creator communicated directly with human beings and this came as a radical change in Indian religious experience. The Creator's message was radical. Unlike Christ, the Creator recognized that Indians and Euramericans were culturally different peoples. In this way, the Creator, working through Neolin, validated Indian culture and began to undermine Christian beliefs among the tribes.

Sometime in 1760, Neolin had a vision in which the Creator warned that Indian peoples were in grave danger. They had rejected the Creator's teachings and would, therefore, lose everything in this world and be damned in the next. The catastrophe could be averted. Euramericans could be driven from Indian lands and Native peoples themselves could return to their original, reciprocal relationship with nature. In effect, the Creator called Native Americans to recognize their own responsibility for their situation. He condemned their addiction to alcohol, quarrelsomeness, and sexual licentiousness.

Most of all, the Creator declared to Neolin that Indians tolerated the settlement of their lands only because they wanted trade goods. This desire led to two kinds of moral failings. First, Indians who hunted with guns violated the reciprocity which was supposed to exist between themselves and animals. The Creator observed that he had placed animals on earth to provide the people with food. He had not intended that they be sold to Euramerican traders. Second, the Creator warned that such commerical relationships had created severe social strife even within the individual tribes. This vicious conflict was so grave a violation of kinship values that the Creator had removed the animals as a punishment. Neolin's message was clear. Either the people would repent and return to proper ways of living, or they would starve and lose their lands to the Americans.

Religious stories like Neolin's put forward a special kind of truth. In becoming the voice of truth itself, Neolin attempted to bridge the gap between absolute and relative truth. He attempted to speak from tradition into the unprecedented troubles of the 1760s. Neolin's tale shows the extreme difficulty of bridging past and present, of conserving the best of the old while changing to ensure survival.

Given the problems facing the Old Northwest tribes, Neolin's message had to have been heard with some uncertainty. It is not known whether Indians perceived themselves as dependent on trade; at least that is not the thrust of Neolin's story. Rather, the Creator demanded that Indian people act positively and take responsibility. Neolin told the people that they could return to traditional values, if they so chose.

The initially successful war of 1763 was partly based on Neolin's vision of moral and cultural liberation. The failure of that war has obscured much that is valuable in Neolin's story. Behind the failure stands the harsh facts of economic need. The tribes could not drive the British away without ammunition, but that was only one part of the situation. At the intertribal level, Neolin's story became a call to arms. But at home, where kinship mattered, the story had another meaning: Neolin urged Indians to renew themselves as family members whose first commitment had to be to each other.

Little is known about the impact of Neolin's teachings, but something of their importance can be seen in the career of the Seneca prophet, Handsome Lake. As one of the forty-nine sachems of the Iroquois Confederacy, Handsome Lake had considerable prominence. But he was also a dispirited drunk, a state of being all too common for end of the century Senecas. The American Revolution had terminated an ancient way of life, bringing an end to hunting, warfare, and diplomacy, and an end to a social life in which men and women contributed equally. The Revolution also accelerated a beginning made long before. Long before the War of Independence, the Iroquois had begun to select aspects of Euramerican culture. George Washington's troops had destroyed frame houses and barns, blacksmith shops, and sawmills. The Seneca continued to draw profitably from Euramerican culture in the 1790s, but the changes sparked little optimism. And, therein lies the importance of Handsome Lake.

As a prophet, Handsome Lake focused on the Seneca's most pressing issue, the survival of the people themselves. For the Seneca, prophets exist only to call the people to moral and social renewal. It did not seem remarkable to them that Handsome Lake had been a drunk. The Seneca knew that prophetic authority derived from no merely human act, and certainly not from individual choice, ability, or ambition. Rather, the prophet is called because he is representative. Handsome Lake the man had internalized both the social and psychological difficulties afflicting his people. Like other Senecas, he felt ashamed, but not even Quaker missionaries could help him, or them, to change.

Instead, Handsome Lake fell dead. He returned transformed by power, now a vehicle and a voice of the basic reality of things. The Seneca recognized Handsome Lake's transformation in a traditional way: the prophet spoke an archaic form of their language, a style of speaking that could not have been learned in everyday speech.

Handsome Lake returned with mythic truth about the sad story of Seneca life. The Seneca listened and in time they themselves were transformed.

Handsome Lake's visions spoke to the Seneca's total condition. The visions located the source of the Seneca's problems in their religious lapses. They directed the prophet to aid his people in bringing their social lives back into line with the old values. The visions thus made it possible for the Seneca to chose wisely from Euramerican culture. Because he spoke of these concerns using the concepts and language of Seneca myth, Handsome Lake's words galvanized the people in ways that Quaker missionaries had not been able to achieve. One of them reported that after hearing Handsome Lake recite his first vision the Seneca were "solid and weighty in spirit", and that he "felt the love of God flowing powerfully amongst us."

Handsome Lake's story resembled Neolin's. Its overall message--that the Seneca must accept responsibility for their sorry condition--was the same. Like Neolin, Handsome Lake pointed to anti-social behavior as the major cause of declension and he summed up Seneca failings in four sins: whiskey, witchcraft, love-magic, and abortion medicines. In his second vision, Handsome Lake not only saw

the resulting damnation of the Seneca, he also met Jesus. "Now tell your people that they will become lost when they follow the ways of the white man," was Jesus' frightening message.

Unlike Neolin, Handsome Lake devised a program of cultural change that worked within pre-existing forms of cultural organization, made sense of adaptations to Euramerican culture, and led to genuine and long-range reform. Handsome Lake stressed that traditional values had to shape Seneca adjustments. In particular, the prophet's grasp of the socio-religious implications of economic change reveal the main characteristics of an effective story.

Handsome Lake squarely faced the facts. The Seneca's ancient hunting economy had been swept away. Hence, the demoralization of the men. The Seneca were also moving toward a lifestyle based on the nuclear, patrilineal family farm instead of the matrilineal clan. Again, the result was social strife as women repulsed male authority. Moreover, acceptance of a money economy threatened the exchange values which had always stressed putting group welfare before private profit.

The prophet identified and responded to each of these concerns. He understood that the authority of the clan mothers had to be wielded with more discretion and he advised them to avoid interfering in their daughter's marriages. In effect, Handsome Lake validated a shift toward men and women sharing work and power. Similarly, Handsome Lake advised maternal uncles that they ought to defer to fathers in

disciplining their nephews, a new rule appropriate to the new social arrangement.

More remarkably, Handsome Lake shaped the Seneca's transition to a Euramerican economy, and did so in a way that countered the social divisiveness of capitalism. He warned the Seneca against pride in material worth, stipulated that they were not to sell agricultural produce among themselves, and required that they maintain collective ownership of tools and resources. In these ways, the prophet showed the Seneca that close contact with American people threatened communal life because it undercut the traditional value of sharing and an economy of reciprocal exchange.

Handsome Lake's story spoke to the Indians' situation with a remarkable sensitivity. The story recognized the excruciating emotional pain individuals experienced during the recent war. In doing so, it helped people to act responsibly. Specifically, the story urged Indians to take collective action: that people should work together was the main theme of Handsome Lake's tale. Moreover, the story accounted for both the psychological and the social impact of Euramerican culture. Finally, Handsome Lake's story taught an attitude of tolerance. Unlike Neolin, whose teachings urged a violent solution, Handsome Lake recommended cooperation between Indian and Euramerican people. In all these ways, the prophet not only reinvigorated Indian identity, he also realistically confronted the fact of cultural pluralism.

## Conclusion: Story and Conflict

Handsome Lake illustrates the ways in which even the most revolutionary story can actually have a conservative character. Like the Seneca revival, the American Revolution was built on old mythic foundations, particularly the precepts of Christian faith and the certainty of civilized progress. Religious and secular truths bolstered each other, thereby obscuring many of the class divisions within the Euramericans' social order. Revolutionaries achieved political independence, and they promulgated far-reaching republican and democratic principles. But those principles and real life were something else again. Initially, the Revolution excluded not only Native Americans, but also Blacks, women, and many rural and urban workers from decision making. The rights of man made for fine sounding political rhetoric, but in the early national period those rights were limited.

Like Native American prophets, Revolutionaries spoke hopeful stories--stories of freedom, stories of possibility. But Euramericans did not share Handsome Lake's insight that the new American order had to embrace cultural pluralism. As they were applied to Native Americans, both official and unofficial Euramerican stories camouflaged colonialism in the cover of friendly help. The Northwest Ordinance expressed the story in 1787: "The utmost good faith shall always be observed towards the Indians; their land and property shall never be taken from them without their consent...." The Ordinance also contained an escape clause, declaring that Indians' property and

liberty would never be compromised except "in just and lawful wars authorized by Congress."

Changing the tale to suit the case, Euramericans sooner or later won the land, thereby alienating Indian peoples from tried and true ways of life. The result was an enduring crisis as Native Americans sought a workable synthesis of traditional values and new culture, and Euroamericans insisted on the veracity of their revolutionary stories. Thus federal agents and missionaries hastened to reform Indians in the name of progress and Christian love even though their program ran afoul of three additional American myths.

First, even though Euramericans claimed to offer Indians membership in the American nation, they built a segregated society. Federal policy envisioned Native American cultural transformation, but did not take into consideration either Native American culture or Euramerican reactions to having Indians as neighbors. Much of the brutality of American history can be attributed to the fact that Euramericans did not have Handsome Lake's appreciation of the delicate balance of Indian values, culture and social well-being.

Moreover, the offer of civilization failed to account for the conventional reaction to Indians as the ultimate outsiders; the wilderness personified. Fear of the stranger had always fueled Indian-White distrust and it continued to do so after the war. Since the governing American symbol was now the vigorous pioneer transforming the land, government promises of peaceful cooperation

contradicted new facts. Even Christianity failed to make sense of cultural pluralism. The idea of one God contradicted the multifaceted nature of tribal solidarity. That solidarity rested on kinship, custom and obligation, not ideological unanimity.

The second undercutting constructive association was based on cultural ethnocentrism. Euramericans were convinced of the superiority of their way of life. From first contact centuries before, Native Americans had been defined in negative terms. They were not religious, and had neither laws nor property. The same continued to shape Federal-Indian relations. Forgetting the economic upheaval caused by massive dispossession, Federal officials claimed that Indians knew nothing of agriculture and so began a program to civilize them. This story not only failed to recognize Indians' sophisticated agricultural knowledge, it also attacked tribal values directly. Unlike Handsome Lake, who strengthened the social reciprocity at the heart of Indian life, Federal officials sought to detribalize Indian people. Individually held property, they argued, would transform the Indian into a citizen.

The final story line had ominous implications for Indian-White relations. Americans contended that theirs was a government of laws. They therefore failed to see that laws surrounding Indian relations often did not govern. Treaties with Indian nations were ostensibly the highest law of the land, but they were respected only in the breech. In frontier areas lawlessness became a way of life. Individuals and states purchased Indian lands in violation of the

Federal government's constitutional authority. Traders used credit, shoddy goods, sweet talk and rum to defraud Indians everywhere. Indian agents and missionaries embezzled annuity funds and skimmed the money sent out to uplift Indians morally and culturally. In these ways, the story of law became a cover for continuing oppression.

In the end, each of these stories has had a history extending from the Revolution until the present, and all three share an important characteristic. Like Neolin's tale, and unlike Handsome Lake's, the Euramerican stories that shaped Indian-White relations enshrined a fatal mistake. Neither Neolin nor the Euramericans were inclined to test their stories against possible contradiction. They didn't realize that their stories failed to fit the facts. Many Native Americans have understood the essential flaw: they have come to know that stories often have a hidden agenda. The Revolution, and its continuing aftermath, have refreshed for them a traditional truth: all stories have a history and, when amnesia strikes the teller, history can repeat itself. But that's another story.

For Further Reading:  
Native Americans and the American Revolution

For general discussions of the revolution see: Edward Countryman, The American Revolution (New York; 1985); Francis Jennings, "The Indians' Revolution," in Alfred E. Young, ed., The American Revolution: Explorations in the History of American Radicalism (DeKalb, 1976); and Dorothy V. Jones, License for Empire: Colonialism by Treaty in Early America (Chicago, 1982). For discussions of the Revolution in the South, see: David H. Corkran, The Carolina Indian Frontier (Columbia, 1970); Michael D. Green, "Alexander McGillivray," in R. David Edmunds, ed. American Indian Leaders: Studies in Diversity (Lincoln; 1980); and James Howlette O'Donnell, III. Southern Indians in the American Revolution. (Knoxville, 1973). For similar treatments of the North, see: Barbara Graymont, The Iroquois in the American Revolution (Syracuse, 1972); Isabel Thompson Kelsay, Joseph Brant 1743-1807: Man of Two Worlds (Sayracuse, N.Y., 1984) and Anthony F.C. Wallace, The Death and Rebirth of the Seneca (New York, 1969).

The immediate post war conflicts are the subject of Wiley Sword, President Washington's Indian War: The Struggle for the Old Northwest, 1790-1795, (Norman, Oklahoma, 1985). For a discussion of the role of myth in shaping relations with Native Americans, see Richard Slotkin, Regeneration Through Violence: The Mythology of the American Frontier, 1600-1860. (Middletown, Conn., 1973).

Comment on Kenneth Morrison, "Native Americans and the American Revolution:  
Historic Stories and Shifting Frontier Conflict"

by

Gary Nash

Morrison's rendition of Native Americans and the American Revolution, as the subtitle states, is essentially one of "shifting frontier conflict." There are three phases to this shifting conflict in the Revolutionary era--first, the renegotiation of relations between tribal and white colonial societies in the pre-revolutionary decade, when the removal of the French from North America drastically altered the symmetry of power that had existed for 150 years; second, the decimation and dispossession of many tribes, whether they fought with or against Americans during the decade after 1776; and third the revitalization movements that in the hands of prophetic leaders partially transformed and reempowered many tribes in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Leaving aside the story-telling aspects of the paper, which reflect his special concern for the role of myth in history, Morrison gives us a pretty conventional account of how tribes east of the Mississippi River suffered great losses in population, power, and prestige, in the first and second phases of this frontier phase of the Revolution, while in the third phase they began to regather themselves, devising strategies of survival in a highly volatile world. This is essentially a "death and rebirth" interpretation of Native American tribes in the Revolutionary and post-Revolutionary eras. The "rebirth" phase of it, it needs to be emphasized, ought to be considered without anticipating overmuch that removal was, we know through hindsight, just over the horizon. Morrison's schema owes the most to Anthony Wallace, but he draws upon other recent scholars such as Barbara Graymont, Howard Peckham, David Corkran, Francis Jennings, James O'Donnell, James Ronda, and James Merrell.

The classroom application of Morrison's recapitulation of Indian-white relations and Indian history in this period requires us to put aside traditional approaches to the American Revolution--and in ways, I believe, that will engage our students while providing an antidote to that patriotic pap dispensed bcentennial celebrations in 1976 and about to descend on us again in 1987. Specifically, we need to understand that, seen most broadly, the Revolution was an era of social upheaval and military conflict in which a bewildering variety of people was swept into a whirlpool of ideas and events, forced to decide what it was they believed in, and obliged--as happens to few of us in modern age--to risk everything in defense of those beliefs. Some of these people were white; some were red; and some were black. For those who were red and white, the goals hammered out on the anvil of revolutionary turmoil were remarkably similar; the gaining or preserving of political independence; the maintenance of cultural integrity; and the safeguarding of property--ancestral homelands as far as most tribes were concerned, material wealth as far as most colonists were concerned. Like most black Americans, most Native Americans concluded that their revolutionary goals could best be achieved through fighting against the side that proclaimed the equality of all men and with the side that the Americans accused of trampling on their natural, irreducible rights. The logic of nearly two hundred years of abrasive contact with colonizing Europeans compelled the choice, for it was the settler-subjects of the English king who most threatened Indian autonomy, just as it was royal power that, before the Revolution, had attempted to protect Indian land from white encroachment by means of the Proclamation Line of 1763.

In the classroom, students will have their eyes opened by considering the parallel nature of Indian and white revolutionary goals. They will also profit

from coming to understand how, in pursuing their revolutionary goals, the tribes shared with the American enemy the problem of how to overcome a long tradition of local identity and intertribal factionalism--how, in other words, to forge a confederated resistance movement. We need to think of the thirteen colonies as tribes that had long engaged in factional conflict. Just as the white "tribes" of Connecticut and New York had to put aside localist attachments and longstanding disagreements, just as Virginians and North Carolinians had to bury animosities that went back several generations, just as northern and southern colonies had to compose their differences, so the Iroquois, Shawnee, Delaware, Creek, Miami, and other tribes had to search for ways to forge a pan-tribal movement out of generations of inter-tribal conflict. For the white revolutionists, as John Adams said, the issue was to make thirteen clocks strike as one. For the red revolutionists east of the Mississippi, the problem was identical. In both societies new leaders emerged in the process of wrestling with this central question, and usually they were men whose military abilities or political persuasiveness gained them attention, suggesting that the fate of their people lay in their hands. Students need to know that while our history books rarely record the names of Red Jacket or Cornplanter of the Seneca, Attakullakulla and Dragging Canoe of the Cherokees, Red Shoes of the Creek, White Eyes of the Delaware, or Little Turtle of the Miami, these leaders were as much the new dominant figures of the Revolutionary era in Indian society as were Hancock, Washington, Hamilton, Jefferson, Nathanael Greene, Richard Henry Lee, and John Paul Jones in white society.

Going into the Revolution with roughly similar goals and parallel problems as white colonists, Native Americans emerged from the Revolution disastrously the losers. This poses an essential problem for students to confront. Surely,

part of the answer is that the red tribes were less successful than the white tribes in overcoming inter-tribal factionalism; partly the answer is that the supplies of European trade goods upon which the tribes had come to depend--especially guns, powder, and shot--were seriously disrupted during the war; and partly the answer is that the tribes were completely abandoned to the Americans by their British allies at war's end. Facing a white society in 1783 that was heavily armed and obsessed with the vision of western lands, tribes such as the Iroquois and Cherokee were forced to cede most of their land. The prewar population build-up in white communities, which had caused worsening economic conditions in many older settlements along the coastal plain, was relieved as thousands of settlers spilled across the mountains after 1783, frequently in violation of treaties contracted by their own elected governments. Aiding these frontiersmen, many of them war veterans, were state and national governments that understood that the western lands, once the native inhabitants were driven away, were the new nation's most valuable resource, its Fort Knox in essence. The sale of western lands provided the revenues both to liquidate the huge war debt and also to underwrite the expense of a nation of tax-shy people. The critical reasoning of students can be enhanced by asking them to examine the idealism of the rhetoricians of white Revolution, as they espoused the ennobling qualities of the "Glorious Cause" in the 1770s, with the ignoble rhetoric and unprincipled actions of revolutionary leaders such as John Sevier of North Carolina, who, in the aftermath of Revolution, pursued a nearly genocidal policy toward tribes that blocked the way of southerners to the west.

It will also pay dividends to explore with students whether the pro-British stance of most Indian tribes was a failure of judgment on their part. This will involve comparing the postwar experience of the several pro-American

tribes--Tuscaroras, Oneidas, and Catawbas, for example--with the experience of the tribes that cast their lots with the British. My own judgment on this, James Merrell's argument with regard to the Catawba notwithstanding, is that the pro-American tribes fared dismally after the war and in some cases worse than the pro-British tribes. The experience of the Oneida, Tuscarora, and Stockbridge demonstrated the futility of aligning with the Americans. However, the wartime attempts at pro-British intertribal confederation played a large role in mounting the next great Indian resistance movement, from about 1783 to 1815, when white Americans, having won a war of national liberation, embarked on a war of national expansion. From the work of a host of such war-tempered Indian leaders arose a new generation of resistance leaders--Black Hawk, Tecumseh, and others.

It is this "second phase" of the American Revolution--the war of national expansion against the tribes of the lands watered by the Ohio River--that also needs to be incorporated into courses on the American Revolutionary era. Many of the same patriots who fought in the Revolution, sometimes fighting under the same officers and with the same weapons, became involved in the war in the West, which was in many respects a continuation or completion of a revolutionary process that had included strong opposition to the Proclamation Line of 1763. Thus, to incorporate Indian history into the history of the American Revolution, we must bring the Old Northwest in the late 1780s and 1790s into our courses. The tribes of the Ohio Valley fought desperately in the postwar era to protect their homelands, only to lose against overwhelming odds when state militias and federal armies, whom they had defeated in the late 1780s and early 1790s, returned with larger and larger forces to invade their land. By this time the humanitarian language of the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 (which ought to be read

by every student just as carefully as they read the Declaration of Independence) had been all but forgotten. "The utmost good faith," promised the Continental Congress in its last significant act, "shall always be observed towards the Indians; their lands and property shall never be taken from them without their consent; and in their property, rights and liberty, they never shall be invaded or disturbed, unless in just and lawful wars authorized by Congress; but laws founded in justice and humanity shall from time to time be made, for preventing wrongs being done to them, and for preserving peace and friendship with them." As the strengthening of state militias and the creation of a national army progressed in the 1790s, Indian societies learned how hollow were the phrases of the Northwest Ordinance. Armed conflict replaced "utmost good faith," and the nation's greatest wartime hero, now its first president, captured the national mood when he wrote, "The gradual extension of our settlements will as certainly cause the Savage as the Wolf to retire; both being beasts of prey tho' they differ in shape."

In the classroom, then, instructors of courses on the American Revolution ought to broaden their perspectives so as to teach students that the conflict--fought by white Americans for life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness--compelled many other occupants of eastern North America to take the British side in pursuit of the same goals. The tawny and dark-skinned people of this land were animated by the doctrine of natural rights as surely as were the minutemen at Concord Bridge or the signers of the Declaration in Philadelphia; and, to be sure, they were as moved by self-interest as were white revolutionaries. Most of them took the other side to gain or preserve these rights and to pursue their own interests, which had been defined by generations of interaction among red, white, and black people in America. They were still

speaking the language of the Revolution in its aftermath, denying, to use the words of tribal spokesmen for the southern tribes, that they had done anything "to forfeit our independence and natural rights . . . ." In their struggle against the white revolutionaries, most of them lost, at least in the proximate sense. What they won, however, was a piece of history, for they kept lit the lamp of liberty and flame of resistance, passing on their own revolutionary heritage--their own stories to use Morrison's image--to their children and their children's children. Our students need to learn that the founding principles of the American Revolution lived on the nineteenth-century struggles of Black Hawk, Tenskatawa, Sequoyah, Denmark Vesey, Nat Turner, Frederick Douglass, and a host of other red and black leaders. They live yet today, for what we proudly call the Spirit of '76 in our white-oriented history books has been at the ideological core of the Black Protest Movement of the 1960s and the Indian Rights Movement of 1970s. Our students need to understand this and to understand as well that Indian history is not only in itself an important part of the history of the American Revolutionary era but is essential for reaching a balanced judgment on the nature of the white colonizers' revolution.

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AMERICAN IMPERIALISM AND THE INDIANS

by

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Historians are divided over the origins of imperialist sentiment in the United States. Did the nation suddenly "stumble" into being an empire in 1898, as a result of the Spanish-American War, or did the Americans annex the Philippine, Hawaiian and Virgin Islands as part of a longer-range search for commercial markets? Some historians have argued that the first stage of imperialism occurred in the 1840s, in the policy of "manifest destiny" during the Mexican War. However, there seems to be a mistaken consensus among many diplomatic historians that the United States did not have a tradition of holding alien peoples as colonial subjects before 1898.

In all of these debates, diplomatic historians have practically ignored the precedents for imperialism that grew out of United States policy toward American Indians. If they mention Native Americans at all, it is usually in the context of the early frontier in the colonial period. Though Spain, France, and England each carved out large empires in North America, the seventeenth century English government was too weak to rule Indians as subject peoples. Its initial efforts at colonization were spearheaded by private business, intent on settlement of white colonists. Yet, by the eighteenth century, a more centralized British government began to shift its policy, putting more emphasis on building a trading empire with Native Americans and using Indian warriors as a mainstay of its military

force against the French and Spanish. In this context, as trading partners and as mercenaries, Indians--especially the Iroquois, Greeks and Cherokees--became important links in the British Empire.

When the United States established its independence, there was considerable continuity from earlier British policies. Like the European imperialists, the American rebels boldly proclaimed their sovereignty over extensive territories which they did not in fact control. They had made the British withdraw from the area east of the Mississippi River in 1783, but they still had to deal with the Indian nations who actually occupied those lands. The new government was not strong enough to conquer the major Indian nations, so it was forced to deal with them by the same treaty-making process used by earlier British officials. Though the Americans were mostly interested in gaining Indian lands for white settlement, U.S. leaders realized they had to develop policies toward Indian peoples as well.

The frontier era was devastating for Native American populations, as the vast majority of Indian people were killed off by numerous Old World diseases and their ranks were thinned in many colonial wars. Yet despite the Americans' belief that Indians were a "vanishing race," the populations of several native groups began to increase after the initial contact period. This fact perplexed American policy-makers, who by and large believed that they were supposed to oversee the continual decline of their "vanishing" charges. When Indians did not vanish, politicians had to decide what status these peoples would hold within the United States.

That decision was not immediate, but was only gradually formed through the nineteenth century.

United States treatment of Indian groups after the passage of the frontier slowly evolved from the initial status of "nation," as represented by the original treaty system. This form of international agreement implicitly negated U.S. claims to full sovereignty, and recognized the independence of those Indian nations with whom it dealt. In ceding parts of their land to the United States, agreeing to pacts of alliance, or even authorizing the U.S. to oversee its relations with other states, the Indian signers did not relinquish either sovereignty or control over their internal affairs. Their position, familiar in international law, was that of small states which concede their autonomy in foreign affairs to a neighboring power, in exchange for a guarantee of internal self-rule and specified rights.

Such a situation is considerably different than one of conquest and unconditional surrender. The United States used the treaty system as its principle way of dealing with Native Americans for nearly a century, for the simple reason that it was easier--and cheaper--for the government to negotiate with Indians than to fight them. After white settlement had surrounded a native group, however, their status was seen by whites as something less than independent. Since the constitution did not clearly deal with the legal status of individual Indians, the disparity between U.S. claims of full sovereignty and the realities of the treaties produced considerable debate among early American policymakers.

An attempt finally to define the legal status of Indians was undertaken by Chief Justice John Marshall. In Fletcher v. Peck (1810) and Johnson and Graham's Lessee v. William McIntosh (1823), Marshall avoided basing his decision on Indian treaties. Instead he ruled that Indian possession of their lands was "a temporary arrangement." In Cherokee Nation v. Georgia (1831) Marshall did admit that the treaties recognized the Cherokees as "a state," but he asserted that they were not a foreign state:

The condition of the Indians in relation to the United States is perhaps unlike that of any other two people in existence....They acknowledge themselves in their treaties to be under the protection of the United States....[and] under the sovereignty and domination of the United States....They may, more correctly, perhaps, be denominated domestic dependent nations. They occupy a territory to which we assert a title independent of their will....they are in a state of pupilage. Their relation to the United States resembles that of a ward to his guardian.

In what was to become the most quoted case relating to Indians in the nineteenth century, Marshall had established a de facto protectorate status for Indian "domestic dependent nations."

The status of individual natives was summarized by Marshall's use of the paternalistic term "ward." What he meant was clearly something less than the status of citizenship. In 1823 Marshall had spoken of Indians as "subjects" and "conquered inhabitants," who could either be "blended with the conquerors"--i.e., given citizenship--"or safely governed as a distinct people." He denied that Indians would be oppressed without citizenship rights, because they would be protected by "feelings of humanity" of government officials. Thus, Marshall had decided that the Constitution allowed the governing of alien peoples without granting them citizenship. Even though he later qualified the

doctrine in Worcester v. Georgia (1832), and protected Indians from state jurisdiction, his earlier terms were the ones that were most quoted in nineteenth-century court cases. He had provided the United States with a model for governing colonial subjects.

For purposes of definition, we must distinguish between expansion and colonialism. Most nation-states have been to some extent expansionist, have spread into neighboring areas, and have taken political control over the inhabitants. Because they share many basic similarities with neighboring societies, this expansionist process usually results in the incorporation of the inhabitants into the body politic. Examples of expansion would include the British domination of the Scots, Prussian control of Bavaria, Russians domination of the Ukraine, and the extension of United States sovereignty over the French Cajuns of Louisiana. Another type of expansion involves pushing a people out of a particular piece of land; examples would include Iroquois, Cherokee, Sioux, and Navajo actions against other tribes who occupied their lands in the prehistoric or early contact periods.

Colonialism, in contrast, involves the conquest and control of culturally different peoples, who are so dissimilar that they cannot easily be incorporated but must be ruled as subjects outside the political process. In the case of transplanted settler nations like the United States, native occupants of adjoining lands were vastly different. These peoples were not merely pushed aside as expansion occurred; they were enveloped under United States control without being given citizenship status. If we define colonialism in this way,

to distinguish it from expansion, we might well conclude that Marshall's decisions approached a conception of Indian "wards" as colonial subjects as early as the 1830s.

Over the next decades colonial control tightened. Later treaties with Indians took a more dogmatic tone and insisted that tribal laws should not be inconsistent with United States laws. This stipulation was used by Chief Justice Roger Taney as a basis for deciding in 1845 that Native Americans were "held to be, and treated as, subject" to the government's "dominion and control." By 1856 Attorney General Caleb Cushing ruled that "Indians are domestic subjects of this Government....who are not therefore citizens."

The major hindrance to this evolving interpretation of Indians as subjects was the existence of the treaties--with their guarantees of tribal self-rule. After the Civil War, policymakers of the victorious and strengthened federal government moved gradually to restrict native rights and sovereignty. Commissioner of Indian Affairs Ely Parker, though himself a Seneca, expressed the sentiment typical of the time that tribes "are not sovereign nations, capable of making treaties.... The only title the law concedes to the lands they occupy or claim is a mere possessory one. But because treaties have been made with them...they have become falsely impressed with the notion of national independence. It is time that this idea should be dispelled."

In 1868 the Supreme Court ruled that Congress could override the promises in an old treaty simply by passing a newer statute, which

could be done without getting the consent of the Indians. Three years later Congress passed a resolution stating that no further treaties would be signed with Indians. But this was not enough for Commissioner of Indian Affairs Edward P. Smith, who in 1873 called for the abrogation of all prior Indian treaties. He wrote: "All recognitions of Indians in any other relation than strictly as subjects of the Government should cease." The Union was moving away from a collective approach to Indians (as "domestic dependent nation" protectorates) and more toward an individual approach (as "helpless and ignorant wards") in which they would be governed directly as colonial subjects.

Congress did not take such an extreme step as direct abrogation of Indian treaties, but it did severely weaken Indian treaty rights. In 1885 Congress extended federal jurisdiction over major crimes on reservations, taking away the right of tribal governments to operate under traditional, or customary law. No agreement to this change was sought from Indians, even though it violated the terms of numerous treaties. The Supreme Court upheld the change in U.S. v. Kagama and misquoted Marshall to justify a decision that Indians "were not a State or nation" but were only "local dependent communities." This new definition was a significant demotion from the sovereignty implied in the treaties, or even from Marshall's protectorate status of "domestic dependent nations."

The 1885 Kagama decision, despite its misstatements of precedent, became the basis for future U.S. Indian policy. The Court concluded

that "the power of the General Government over these remnants of a race once powerful, now weak and diminished in numbers, is necessary to their protection." It is indeed ironic that, in an era when the federal government was taking a "hands-off" attitude toward the problems of the poor and was abandoning protection of the rights of Afro-Americans, it was moving so strongly to solidify its control over its Indian "subjects" on the justification that they needed protection. By deciding to govern Native Americans directly, the United States was solidifying its own colonial system at the same time as the Europeans were building colonies in Africa and Asia.

Indians were subjects, not citizens. The Supreme Court declared that Indians born on reservations were not granted citizenship by the Fourteenth Amendment. The only way they could become citizens was by naturalization or by explicit provisions of a treaty or statute. Indians were instead defined as "'nationals,' or persons owing allegiance to the United States but without those privileges which go only with citizenship." Precisely the same status was later conferred upon U.S. insular subjects after the Spanish-American War.

By 1898, when the United States began conquering overseas territories, the internal colonial system was complete. In that year Congress passed the Curtis Act, which abolished tribal governments in Indian Territory. This was done without the agreement of the Indians, and in violation of their treaties. The Supreme Court quickly ruled, in Stephens v. Cherokee Nation, that this was entirely legal. Chief Justice Melville Fuller admitted the Cherokee treaties had guaranteed

that the Indians could govern themselves and that they would never be included within a state without their consent; yet he used U.S. v. Kagama to establish that Indians were dependent wards. Extending colonialism further, he stated that Indians were under the "paramount authority" of Congress, which could alter or abolish tribal governments without regard to treaty promises.

The way was opened for Congress to ignore tribal governments in Indian Territory, in favor of a white-dominated Oklahoma Territory. This process was remarkably similar to the process by which the native government of Hawaii went unrecognized in favor of a white man's provisional republic. Likewise, a United States district court in Alaska decided that whites, even of Russian and foreign extraction, were automatically recognized as naturalized citizens, while Indians were not. Alaska Natives were denied citizenship, but they were "subject to such laws and regulations as the United States may from time to time adopt."

The United States did not make the "mistake" of recognizing native governments in the Philippines through treaties, as it had done earlier with Indians. The Supreme Court "Insular Cases" provided that Congress should have the same amount of unrestricted freedom of action that it had earlier decided to apply over Native Americans. By the end of the century the federal government held virtually unlimited power over American Indians. This power was locally applied by the agents of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, but its reality to Indians was attested in 1899 by anthropologist George B. Grinnell. He wrote: "An

Indian agent has absolute control of affairs on his reservation....more nearly absolute than anything else that we in this country know of....The courts protect citizens; but the Indian is not a citizen, and nothing protects him. Congress has the sole power to order how he shall live, and where."

The realities of this control hit Indian people hard. Besides losing their lands, many tribes lost the power to make decisions about their way of life. Their religions and ceremonies were often suppressed by government agents, and they were forced to adopt Christianity. As was occurring in Africa and Asia, missionaries swarmed over reservations, commanding new ways of thinking and weakening native confidence in their old way of doing things. Indian family relations, gender roles, and sexuality were revolutionized by the changes. Traditional chiefs had to struggle to hold onto any authority at all, while shamans had to operate in secret. Without control of enough land to support themselves by their prior means, they were subject to the dictates of white agents in order to get enough food to live on. With tribal governments weak or abolished, they often had no intermediaries other than those provided by the colonial system itself.

By 1898 Native Americans were no longer members of independent nations capable of making treaties with the United States; no longer were they even accorded the protectorate status of "domestic dependent nations." They were not nations at all, only powerless subjects without any treaty guarantees that the government was bound to

respect. This condition had not come about as suddenly as the establishment of United States authority over its Filipino and other island subjects, but Indians lived under a control as thoroughly colonial as any inhabitants of American overseas territories.

The reality of this subject status, and its similarity to that of the inhabitants of the new island territories, was not lost on those whites who were most concerned about United States Indian policy. Former Senator Henry L. Dawes, long identified with the policy of breaking up communal landholding among Indians in favor of individual allotments, wrote in 1899 that Indian policy should be used as a precedent in dealing with "other alien races whose future had been put in our keeping" by the Spanish war. Favoring colonial retention of the Philippines, Dawes wrote that for establishing procedures toward the insulars, "Our policy with the Indians becomes an object lesson worthy of careful and candid study."

The most influential advisory group on Indian policy was the Lake Mohonk Conference of Friends of the Indians. This annual meeting of missionaries, educators, and reformers tried to protect Indians from exploitation by whites; but they had no respect for native cultures and believed that Indians should merge into the American melting pot. The conference speakers by and large supported imperialism abroad, and in the years after 1898 almost half of the conference sessions dealt with overseas territories. Their 1903 platform stated that the same principles they had applied to Indians "should govern us in all our dealings with other dependent people." The next year the official

title was changed to the "Lake Mohonk Conference of the Indian and Other Dependent Peoples," and a report from the meeting concluded that the unanimous testimony of the speakers was that neither Indians nor insulars could "be abandoned to themselves....To cast them upon their own resources would be disastrous."

The 1901 Mohonk platform recommended that the government hold lands in trust for the natives, appoint officials by qualification rather than by political patronage, and promote education and "Christian civilization." It recommended these guidelines equally for Indians and insular territories: "The experience of the past [with Indians]" indicates the errors which we should avoid...and the ends which we should seek in our relations with all dependent races under American sovereignty. Capacity for self-government in dependent and inexperienced races, is a result to be achieved by patient and persistent endeavor; it is not to be assumed that they already possess it." Thus, this influential group of Indian policy advocates recognized the colonial-subject status of Native Americans and proposed that the experience gained should be applied to the alien subject peoples of the new territories beyond the seas.

This universal perspective was shared by the leading imperialist spokesmen, both inside and outside of government. Not all expansionists favored American retention of island colonies, but all imperialists were strong believers in the correctness of past American expansion. In the great drama of western expansion, Native Americans were assigned the role of opponents of progress. Imperialist Henry

Cabot Lodge, for example, portrayed Indians as "cunning, treacherous, and cruel," and complained of "false sentimentality about the noble and injured red man." Likewise, John Hay spoke of pioneer victory over Indians as "the righteous victory of light over darkness....the fight of civilization against barbarism."

The American imperialist who wrote most about Indians was Theodore Roosevelt, and his feelings were as strong on one subject as on the other. His multivolume The Winning of the West was filled with accounts of gory atrocities by Indians, while similar actions by whites were usually excused as justifiable revenge. Roosevelt's basic claim was that Indians did not own their homelands, and thus had no right to oppose white expansion. He wrote: "The Indians never had any real title to the soil....This great continent could not have been kept as nothing but a game preserve for squalid savages.... The man who puts the soil to use must of right dispossess the man who does not, or the world will come to a standstill." Ignoring the many Indian groups that were farmers, Roosevelt declared that only agricultural peoples were entitled to own land.

The imperialists believed that their actions abroad were similar to past United States expansion over North America. The tone of this argument was set in American thought even before 1898. John Fiske, an influential historian, wrote in Harper's in 1885 that "the work which the English race began when it colonized North America is destined to go on" in other continents. Frederick Jackson Turner wrote in 1896 that the most prominent feature of American history was expansion.

Though expansion temporarily came to a halt with the end of the western frontier, he noted, "demands for a vigorous foreign policy...and for the extension of American influence to outlying islands and adjoining countries, are indications that the movement will continue." Turner's idea of the need for a new frontier abroad to replace the old one in the West had an impact on Roosevelt and Brooks Adams, who both exerted considerable influence on the McKinley administration.

The stage was set for imperialists to argue that their program was rooted in the past. In a speech before Congress favoring the retention of the Philippines, Senator Lodge stated that "the record of American expansions which closes with Alaska has been a long one, and today we do but continue the same movement. The same policy runs through them all." Given these facts, Whitelaw Reid asked, "Why mourn over our present course as a departure from the policy of the fathers? For a hundred years the uniform policy which they began and their sons continued has been acquisition, expansion....The precedent was established before we were born."

Historians who say that 1898 was a new departure have seen the annexation of distant noncontiguous islands as different from the addition of contiguous territory destined for statehood. The imperialists argued differently. In the first place, Alaska was noncontiguous, and neither that territory, Indian Territory, nor New Mexico Territory were seen as destined to become states unless more Anglo-Saxons populated them. Some imperialists supported white

settlement in Hawaii and the Philippines, pointing out that this was no more ridiculous than settlement of the "Great American Desert" had seemed in the early nineteenth century. In the second place, imperialists did not see the distance of the Philippines from the United States as a problem. They pointed out that when California was annexed in 1848, it took more time to reach it from the east than it took to get to the Philippines fifty years later.

Furthermore, the imperialists argued that the constitution gave Congress supreme and total power over the territories, to rule as they pleased without granting citizenship or constitutional rights to the inhabitants. They emphasized that the right to govern subject peoples in territories "is full and plenary," and that "there may be no difference between the form of government of a Territory and that of a colony." Senator Lodge made the comparison explicit between congressional power over Indians and over Filipinos, quoting from John Marshall's "domestic dependent nation" doctrine as the legal basis for taking over the Philippines.

When anti-imperialists claimed that annexing the Philippines would automatically admit Filipinos to United States citizenship, the imperialists replied that it was not so, because of the Indian precedent. Lodge, in explaining that Filipinos would become non-citizen subjects, just as Indians were, said:

the other day...a great Democratic thinker announced that a republic could have no subjects. He seems to have forgotten that this Republic not only has held subjects from the beginning, in the presence of those whom we euphemistically call the "wards of the nation," but that...we not only hold subjects, but have acquired them by purchase.... [We]

denied to the Indian tribes even the right to choose their allegiance, or to become citizens.

A University of Chicago political scientist argued in 1899 that "uncivilized nations under tribal relations [in the Philippines] would occupy the same status precisely as our own Indians...They are, in fact, 'Indians'--and the fourteenth amendment does not make citizens of Indians."

The other main argument of the anti-imperialists was that the American form of government was based on the doctrine of the "consent of the governed" in the Declaration of Independence. Here again the imperialists used the Indian precedent with devastating accuracy. In his acceptance speech to the Republican nomination for the vice-presidency in 1900, Roosevelt stated that on Indian reservations "the army officers and the civilian agents still exercise authority without asking the 'consent of the governed.' We must proceed in the Philippines with the same wise caution." Imperialists liked to note that Thomas Jefferson himself, who authored the consent doctrine, later proceeded to govern Indians in the Louisiana Purchase without their consent. Imperialists held that Jefferson's doctrine applied "only to our own race, and to those people whom we can assimilate rapidly." Indians "are not men, within the meaning of the theory" that all men are created equal.

Imperialists never questioned the rightness of expanding over Indian lands without their consent, and because this feeling was almost universal among Americans, imperialist rhetoric was heavy with historical comparisons. Connecticut Senator Orville Platt suggested

that the anti-imperialist position "would have turned back the Mayflower from our coast and would have prevented our expansion westward." Senator Lodge concluded that if the anti-imperialists were right, "then our whole past record of expansion is a crime." Because most white Americans did not believe that their past was criminal, they accepted the rightness of their actions in the Philippines.

Most anti-imperialists were also proud of America's national expansion, so their only alternative was to criticize the cruelty of federal Indian policy. A few anti-imperialists took the challenge and tried to show that, because of past errors, future expansion would be a mistake. Writers like Moorfield Storey, president of the Anti-Imperialist League, believed as firmly in self-government for Indians as for Filipinos. Charles Francis Adams also was scornful of imperialist rhetoric about "uplifting savages," because of the "unchristian, brutal, exterminating" treatment to which Indians were subjected. Likewise, E. L. Godkin in The Nation argued that before imperialists could claim that Americans were capable of governing inferior races abroad, they must provide evidence that they had done well in the past. But, he wrote, "No one pretends that our Government has dealt well with the Indians....[Imperialists] declare that we have responsibilities in Asia that we must not shirk. We had responsibilities here which we did shirk...and it is a shameless proceeding to ignore our past in imagining our future."

Nevertheless, imperialists felt they were doing the right thing for the peoples of the Philippines and other islands occupied by the

United States armed forces. Imperialists believed that such an expansion would be of ultimate benefit to those peoples, because American "civilization" was unquestioningly superior to other cultures' "savagism." The ethnocentric bias of this belief was overshadowed by a loudly proclaimed concern for saving the heathen. This sense of duty was expressed forcefully by President William McKinley. In his official instructions to the Philippine Commission in 1900, the president wrote that the natives should be subjected to wise and firm regulation: "Active effort should be exercised to prevent barbarous practices and introduce civilized customs."

This belief in the need to govern Indians, Filipinos and other "barbarous" peoples similarly was also held by congressmen. Senate roll call votes show that the Senators who consistently supported a dominant policy over American Indians also were strong supporters of imperialism. Most imperialist speakers in Congress made an analogy with Indians, and none denied the analogy. For example, Senator William Ross, in arguing against a simple protectorate status for the Philippines, saw valuable lessons in previous policies toward Indians. Under the "domestic dependent nations" concept, he concluded, "this nation exercised, in fact, a protectorate over the [Indian] tribes, and allowed the natives of the country to manage their tribal and other relations in their own way. The advancement in civilization was very slow....During the comparatively few years that Congress has, by direct legislation, controlled their relations to each other and to the reservations, the advancement in civilization has been tenfold more rapid."

Ultimately, Theodore Roosevelt contended, the civilization of the Philippines under American domination would be of benefit to the Filipinos. As it had occurred with Indians, peace and order could only come about after subjugation to civilization, "for the barbarian will yield only to force." Indian-white warfare "had to continue until we expanded over the country....The same will be true of the Philippines....so that one more fair spot of the world's surface shall have been snatched from the forces of darkness."

When fighting broke out in the Philippines in early 1899, Senator William Stewart compared the rebel leader Emilio Aguinaldo with "Tecumseh, Sitting Bull, Old Cochise, or some other celebrated Indian warrior." He asked: "How does the insurrection and guerrilla warfare practiced by Aguinaldo differ in character from the numerous Indian wars?" In his 1900 acceptance speech for the Republican vice-presidential nomination, Roosevelt made many references comparing Indian wars with the Filipino insurrection. Indians "rebelled and waged war exactly as some of the Tagals have rebelled and waged war." These parallels were so "exact," Roosevelt concluded, that a grant of self-government to the Philippines "would be like granting self-government to an Apache reservation under some local chief." If this conception of Filipino resistance could be placed in the familiar context of Indian warfare, then the insurgents were sure to have less support from Americans.

The impact of imperialist rhetoric on actual events in the Philippines, especially during the 1899-1902 insurrection, influenced

the feeling among United States troops that this was merely another Indian war. In the first place, most of the regiments in the islands were from the western states, where memories of Indian wars were strongest. Those troops who did not already accept the analogy were taught upon arrival "that the Filipinos were savages no better than our Indians." Furthermore, nearly ninety percent of the upper-level officers in the Philippines had seen service in fighting Indians. This gave the army a sense of confidence that they would be able to handle the insurgents in an accustomed style.

The similarity in the administration of the Philippines to Indian affairs was reflected not only in military continuities, but in civil government as well. A Division of Insular Affairs was established in the War Department in December 1898; its name was changed to the Bureau of Insular Affairs in 1902. This governing body in charge of all United States territories abroad remained in the War Department until 1939, when it was transferred to the Department of the Interior. This process of administrative transfer from War to Interior occurred in exactly the same manner for the Bureau of Indian Affairs ninety years earlier. Even the bureau names were similar.

Though the War Department kept its insular operations separated from the Indian office, because of bureaucratic rivalry and because of corruption in the Indian agency, the two offices shared similar assumptions. Secretary of War Elihu Root, who supervised the insular bureau, felt that especially for the tribal populations of the Philippines, the government should follow a policy "very similar to

that which it has long performed in relation to the Indian tribes." He quoted extensively from the Supreme Court decision in Cherokee Nation v. Georgia and directed that "the close general analogy to the relations of the North American Indians should be used."

In its actual operation, the Bureau of Insular Affairs drew upon the background of its leaders in Indian affairs. Both Major John J. Pershing, who set up and headed the bureau in 1889, and General Clarence R. Edwards, who directed it from 1900 to 1912, had military backgrounds in the West with Indians. All of the four military governors of the Philippines between 1898 and 1902 had seen extensive Indian service. Given this situation, Philippine civil governor William Howard Taft represents an exception, because he had no previous experience with Indians. Yet Taft received instructions from McKinley and Root to follow a policy based "by analogy to the statutes in the United States dealing with the Indian tribes."

Taft's subordinate David Barrows, who established the Bureau of Non-Christian Tribes in the island and who later headed the Philippine school system, was an anthropologist who focused his prior research on the Cahuilla Indians. Another subordinate, the law officer of the Division of Insular Affairs, also quoting Supreme Court decisions on Indians as precedents, concluded that both groups were "subjects" of the United States. The essential unity of purpose of the government with regard to both Native Americans and insular natives was plainly stated by the assistant to the chief of the Bureau of Insular Affairs, W. L. Pepperman. Speaking to the Lake Mohonk Conference in 1904, he

informed them that "what your body is interested in seeing should be done and well done in the case of the Indians, the Insular Government in the Philippines is interested in seeing should be done and well done among the Filipinos....the idea is the same."

An analysis of policies toward American Indians thus shows that the evolving legal status of Indians by the late nineteenth century was a "subject" status that was similar to the status imposed on other colonial peoples. To be an Indian "ward" was in fact to be a colonial subject, and this condition was recognized both by Indian policymakers and by imperialists. This attitude was held so strongly by both federal and nongovernmental spokespersons, that it reached a level of near consensus among white Americans of the time. As Albert Bushnell Hart summarized in 1899, the United States had many "colonies" in its Indian reservations: "our Indian agents have a status very like that of British residents in the native states of India" and the western Indian Territory was most comparable to the British colonial system in its empire. Accordingly, Hart felt that America's Indian wars should be seen as colonial insurrections and its Indians as subjects. Exactly what Indian policymakers meant when they referred to Native Americans as "wards" is not clear until investigated from the different perspectives of foreign affairs.

Likewise, an Indian perspective suggests a new interpretation of United States diplomatic history. From the viewpoint of the Indians, an alien empire had overpowered them and forced them into a colonial system. Indian people lost much of their lands first, and then later

their rights of self-government. After they no longer had power, they were stripped of their remaining resources and even of much of their culture. The colonial system forced them to conform to an alien economy, religion, educational system, and family structure.

Americans would do well to reexamine and accept at face value the argument of the imperialists themselves that they were not making a new departure by holding colonial subjects. To quote Hart further, the United States "for more than a hundred years has been a great colonial power." The Spanish-American War annexations, he concluded, were "not signs of a new policy, but the enlargement of a policy long pursued" over Indians. Holding culturally different peoples as subjects was as old as the republic itself, and "uncivilized" groups were given little access to the ideas of citizenship and self-government. Even though imperialists made references to Afro-Americans and to the Chinese, they concentrated on Indians because of the clear parallels in land dispossession based on a dichotomy between savagism and civilization. They used the Indian analogy effectively, and anti-imperialists could not break the white consensus on Indians. Anti-imperialists' attempts to cite imperialism as a dangerous new departure fell on deaf ears.

Instead of seeing 1898 as a new departure, we should view the Philippine annexation as the last episode of a nineteenth-century pattern of territorial acquisition and direct political rule of subject peoples. First it happened in eastern North America, then in western North America, then in Alaska, and lastly in the Pacific. In

all those areas, an internal colonial system evolved to rule  
indigenous subject peoples.

714-51-01

#### FOR FURTHER READING

There is a vast literature on the topic of Indians as subjects of the European colonial powers. A good place to begin is Gary Nash, Red, White, and Black: The Peoples of Early America (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1982); Francis Jennings, The Invasion of America: Indians, Colonialism, and the Cant of Conquest (New York, 1976); and Wilbur Jacobs, Dispossessing the American Indian (New York: Scribners, 1972).

Representative treaties are reprinted in Wilcomb E. Washburn, ed., The American Indian and the United States: A Documentary History (New York, 1973). The evolution of Indian subject status can be seen in the U.S. Supreme Court Reports. Those cases mentioned in the text, as well as others, are analyzed in Walter L. Williams, "From Independence to Wardship: The Legal Process of Erosion of American Indian Sovereignty, 1810-1903," American Indian Culture and Research Journal 7 (1984): 5-32. The quotation from Ely Parker, and an assessment of the position of the Indian in relation to land allotment and other government programs, is in Wilcomb Washburn, The Indian in America (New York, 1975). See also his Red Man's Land, White Man's Law: A Study of the Past and Present Status of the American Indian (New York, 1971).

The road to colonial subject status can be traced in many studies of nineteenth century U.S. Indian policy cited elsewhere in this volume. For the argument that there is a close connection between U.S. policies dominating Indians and American imperialist expansion

abroad, see Walter L. Williams, "United States Indian Policy and the Debate over Philippine Annexation: Implications for the Origins of American Imperialism,: Journal of American History 66 (1980): 810-31; and Richard Drinnon, Facing West: The Metaphysics of Indian-Hating and Empire-Building (New York, 1980).

714-51-01

Comment on Walter Williams, "American Imperialism and the Indians"

By

Gary Nash

Walter Williams' paper is a revised version of the important article he published in the Journal of American History several years ago. He argues for the impact of the long history of government relations with Indian tribes on the shaping of an imperialist mentality and an imperialist foreign policy in the late nineteenth century. Williams deftly links seemingly unconnected phenomena--that is, unconnected by previous historians--namely, the forging of an imperialist policy toward the world beyond our territorial boundaries and the history of United States policy toward Native American tribes. The United States, he contends, learned how to hold "alien peoples as colonial subjects" long before 1898 or even 1848, and the lessons learned from the seventeenth to the mid-nineteenth century were amply applied when an industrializing and demographically burgeoning America began to flex its geopolitical muscles and stake out worldwide markets. At home, treaties made in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, guaranteeing tribal self-rule, hindered the government's attempts to control Indians as a subject people; but after the Civil War these obstacles were systematically overcome by judicial and legislative decisions. Abroad, the proto-imperialist American nation applied the lessons it had learned in the school of Indian-white relations.

Williams' argument is not accepted by all diplomatic and political historians, some of whom believe that without the long

experience with Native Americans the course of American overseas expansion would have been exactly the same. But for the purposes of classroom application the difficulty is rather that Williams' argument is not so much about Native American history as about government Indian policy. Its focus is white policy makers, judges, legislators, and the like. Indians are included only as the objects of white policy, not as historical actors themselves. Therefore, its application to the classroom for courses in nineteenth-century American history is limited. We need a larger framework and a shift of focus in order to imagine how we can imbed Native American history, especially tribal-centered American history, into nineteenth-century American history as it has been traditionally taught. I am thinking here particularly about survey level courses that deal with the middle period of American history, roughly from the Jefferson presidency to the early twentieth century, and about upper-division courses on westward expansion or on the rise of industrial America after the Civil War.

In contriving a broader context, we must think of Native American history in the postbellum era, as well as the history of Indian-white relations, as integrally related to the rise of America as an industrial nation. The crucial first stages of the transformation of the American people into an urbanized, industrialized society and the historical experience of the many tribes west of the Mississippi, some of them already forcibly transplanted from east of the river, need to be thought of as closely linked phenomena.

Let us consider this for a moment. When Americans took up arms against each other in 1861 agriculture was the country's leading source of economic growth and farming was the principal occupation of its people. Forty years later manufacturing replaced agriculture as the leading sector of the economy, and farmers were rapidly on the decline as a percentage of the population--a historical trend that by our own times has reduced the proportion of farmers in our population to about 5 percent. The rise of smokestack America required extracting from each ecological region and from each of the nation's various population pools whatever they had to yield up. From mining areas came gold and silver to finance industrial expansion and other ores essential to the age of machines. From timber lands came the construction materials for burgeoning towns and cities. From former slaves came labor power in a variety of settings. Farmers' sons, and daughters too, had to be transformed from rural agriculturalists into urban dwelling and industrial workers. Massive immigration fed the industrializing process as well.

The development of the trans-Mississippi West was essential to the process of industrialization, for it became the breadbasket, meat locker, and eventually the fruit bowl of smokestack America. The rapid migration of a large part of America's farming population west of the Mississippi, brought millions of acres under cultivation between 1865 and 1900, and put on the tables and in the closets of those in the urban, industrial sector of the economy the cheap basic commodities--food and clothes--essential to the pace at which the industrial economy grew. Thus, an overriding necessity was to clear the trans-Mississippi region of those mighty encumbrances to farming,

ranching, and mining--the Native American tribes. Every other group in the nation yielded up its labor power to the industrial process in one way or another. But Native Americans yielded up their land. Accordingly, the Second Great Removal began. It is indicative of our myopia as historians that we give it far less attention in our textbooks than the first great removal, which was much less important in sheer numbers of people involved, although of course it set the precedent for later government policy.

The wars of the Great Plains, in other words, ought to be incorporated in our presentation of nineteenth-century American history as industrial wars. The Dawes Severalty Act of 1887 needs to be thought of as part and parcel of a bundle of legislation meant to hasten the advent of industrialization. The Ghost Dance and other Indian resistance movements of the period ought to be treated and compared with the formation of the Knights of Labor, the Grange, the Populists, the IWW, and the Socialist Party because we are really confronting the problem of how Native Americans, industrial workers, and farmers responded to the immensely wrenching changes, in human life and community social dynamics, required by industrialization and the rise of a corporate economy. All of these groups, as well as black Americans, women, and immigrant Americans, were deeply affected in the era of rapid industrialization; all of them had to devise strategies of resistance, accommodation, and reform; and all of them lifted their voices in a crescendo of protest by the late 1880s, by which time it was evident that the power of the federal government was to be deployed primarily on the side of those on the capital side of

the labor/capital equation.

In incorporating nineteenth-century Indian history into American history in general, we thus need less compartmentalization. Rather, we need an overarching synthesis which links together the various phenomena that have been artificially wrenched apart by historians of westward expansion, industrialization, urbanization, mass immigration, the Plains Wars, and the second Indian removal campaigns of state and federal governments. All of these historical movements and transformations were braided together in what is called too blandly the "rise of modern America" or "nationalizing the republic" to use but two textbook labels for this epoch. I believe that nineteenth-century tribal histories could be placed within the framework suggested above.

Labor historians have lately attempted such a broad synthesis, but I will use them, after the first applauding their efforts, as an example of how we limit ourselves when we try to describe the moon without looking at all of its sides. Labor historians have always wrestled with the problem of "American exceptionalism"--the idea that Americans, because they lacked a feudal past and a tradition of violent protest and radical politics, were alone among the western industrializing nations to negotiate the troubled waters separating a rurally based mercantile economy and an industrial capitalist economy. Only America, it has been argued, was spared the severe class conflict engendered everywhere else by industrialization, and only in America was it impossible to form a viable socialist party of workers and

reformers. Only recently have labor historians argued convincingly against this argument of American exceptionalism, noticing in their reexamination of nineteenth-century American history what Sean Wilentz has called "the special timbre and strange ferocity of class formation" and arguing that the rise of smokestack America produced "one of the bloodiest crescendos of industrial conflict in history."

Wilentz and others are on the right track in attempting to situate nineteenth-century labor history in its broadest context, which is the political, economic, and social history of American capitalism in the era between the Civil War and the early twentieth century. But the new labor historians do not go far enough because they have ignored the history of tribal Americans in this era. If they studied the history of the western tribes, they would see that the wars against them were an important aspect of the growth of industrial capitalism. The violence between the house of labor and the house of capital, at Homestead, Pullman, Coeur d'Alene, Cripple Creek, and a hundred other locations, was generically connected to the far greater violence that took place in the same era when local settlers, state militias, and federal armies met a host of tribes determined to protect their ancient homelands, their political autonomy, and their cultural integrity. These Indian wars and subsequent Indian removals, occurring on the Great Plains, in the Rocky Mountains, in the Great Basin, and on the Pacific Slope, were wars connected to America's rise as an industrial giant. If they are thus conceptualized, it evident that the process of bringing America into the industrial capitalist stage of development was the most

conflict-ridden and destructive of any western nation because nowhere in Europe where industrialization took place was it necessary to remove and destroy an indigenous people who stood in the way of what is often called "modernization"--a term heavily freighted with conservative ideological commitments assumptions profoundly revealing of how, when Indian history is separated out from American history in general, or simply ignored, we grossly distort the American experience and falsely compare it to contemporary European historical experiences.

714-54-10

How the West Was Lost

by

William T. Hagan

In a remarkably brief period - the 38 years from 1848 to 1886 - the Indians of the western half of what is today the United States lost their fight against the white invaders and had most of their land taken from them. Some of these Native Americans already had had several generations of contact with white men. Indians of the Southwest and California had been trying to cope with the Spanish, the Mexicans, and the Americans recently settled in Texas. Other tribes had had dealings with English, Russian, and American explorers, trappers and traders. As a result, most of the tribes of the western regions had the time to make some adjustments, and to acquire new tools, weapons, even, particularly in the case of the Pueblo groups, new crops and livestock. While already some Indians had suffered badly at the hands of the invaders, many others had seen an improvement in their standard of living.

In 1848 the West was populated by hundreds of flourishing, autonomous Native American societies enjoying cultures which had evolved over many centuries. In hardly more than a generation, however, these same societies would have most of their territory wrested from them, and their religious, social, and political practices subjected to attack. There must be few instances in history when people of a comparably sized region suffered such violent dislocation, physical and cultural, in such a brief period of time.

The major difficulty in presenting the story of "How the West Was Lost" is that it was not a single story, but rather literally hundreds of stories, as

many as there were groups of Indians in that region in the 1840s. The individual unit could have been as small as a few hundred people, or as large as several thousand. Nor did they suffer equally. The Pueblos suffered relatively less as they were farmers and had managed to retain much of their land. The Plains Indians suffered most because of continuation of their life as nomadic buffalo hunters became impossible. But each pueblo's experience differed somewhat from its neighbors, and the Plains bands, which were the focus of the loyalties of their members, each had its own story. As a result of this political fragmentation, the narrator of *How the West Was Lost* is compelled to approach the subject by regions, in the process lumping together many disparate Indian experiences.

It is logical to begin, both geographically and chronologically with the Plains Indians. In the early 1840s these Indians were living testimony to how Native Americans had been altered by contact with Europeans. The acquisition of horses had given them the mobility which was the principal characteristic of their lifestyle in the mid-19th Century. Ownership of horses had been sufficiently diffused so that their nomadic life had evolved to its highest state and provided a challenging and deeply satisfying life for thousands of Plains Indians.

But already they were being forced to cope with intruders. In the late 1820s it was the fur trappers ascending the Missouri River with whom the warriors occasionally clashed. By the 1830s wagon trains were appearing on the Santa Fe Trail and the Southern Plains tribes were reacting angrily. In the next decade thousands of whites crossed the plains enroute to Oregon and California, killing game and destroying scarce timber resources as they went.

The Plains tribes had staked out and maintained their hunting grounds against other Indians by force of arms, resulting in what were the 1840s traditional enmities among them. They certainly were not prepared to stand meekly aside for the white invaders. Moreover, their societies honored the man who demonstrated his courage in combat, and expected friends and relatives to seek revenge for band members lost in battle.

Closely following the settlement of the Oregon question in 1846 and the Mexican cession to the United States two years later, was the discovery of gold in California. All had momentous consequences for the Plains tribes which had to try to cope with a rapidly escalating scale of invasion. Now white men seeking precious metals were ignoring Indian territorial claims to search every nook and cranny of the West. Tribesmen also had to contend with the intrusions of stagecoach operators, and railroad and telegraph line construction crews. Warriors struck back at the encroachers, but in an unsystematic and relatively ineffective fashion.

The nature of Plains Indian society, with its emphasis on the rights of the individual and its absence of political centralization, made effective resistance difficult if not impossible. Moreover, tribes which were traditional enemies did not close ranks in the face of the greater threat. The absence of fixed tribal authority meant that even the several bands of a particular tribe would have difficulty uniting for a campaign. Those qualities which made Indian society so attractive to the individualist, diminished their capacity for organized resistance.

Beginning in the 1850s the Plains Indians were introduced to the complexities of treaty negotiation. In 1851 the northern tribes, and in 1853 the southern, participated in councils which resulted in pieces of paper which, according to the white man, roughly delineated the boundaries of the principal tribes and secured permission for the Americans to maintain military posts on Indian land and to traverse specified trails. But in these and subsequent negotiations, there was no guarantee of participation by all the bands concerned, nor any real machinery by which a handful of chiefs and headmen could bargain away the property of all members of a tribe. For the average Indian the negotiations were significant only to the extent that he or she shared in the distribution of gifts which were provided to attract them to the council site. The resulting treaties also usually provided for annual distributions of goods, and the annuities which would become such bones of contention. These, nevertheless, usually did not amount to more than the equivalent of a few dollars worth of shoddy merchandise per individual.

As the frustration of the Indians mounted, they vented it by attacks on outlying ranches, wagon trains, and stagecoaches. The Americans responded by establishing more military posts in the area, which in turn attracted more settlers, further alarming the Indians and driving them to additional efforts to protect their land. By the 1860s the fighting had intensified to the point that the white man often said wars were occurring. For the Indians it was simply more of the same. Raiding parties, usually as few as thirty or forty warriors, would ride from their camps seeking revenge for casualties suffered in an earlier raid, or simply the opportunity to count the coups which gave a man status or to increase his pony herd at the expense of some rancher or army post. Prisoners might also be taken who could then be held for ransom. If successful,

the raid would probably lead to troops trying to run down the perpetrators, and another cycle of violence would be underway.

The Indians seldom had much trouble eluding the army columns pursuing them.

Entire camps, including women, children and the elderly, proved elusive targets in terrain where an unobserved approach by an army column was extremely difficult. If the troops pressed too closely, the Indians would disperse, forcing the officer commanding to either give up the pursuit or persist against a steadily diminishing target.

While the Plains warriors held their own in the initial skirmishing, a new series of treaties in 1867 and 1868 provided the framework for their ultimate undoing. These treaties, negotiated at councils to which the Indians were attracted as usual by the promise of food and presents, contained terms of far reaching significance. By such treaties as that negotiated on Medicine Lodge Creek in 1867 with the Kiowas, Comanches, and Kiowa Apaches, those tribes were committed to selling to the United States most of their land, and settling on reservations. On these they were supposed to begin farming and to send their children to school. And there was provision in the treaties for the ultimate division of the reservations into family sized farms, with the implication that the Indians would over a thirty year period abandon their communal lifestyle and adopt the white man's customs.

It is highly unlikely that the average Indian appreciated that such treaties committed him to changing an entire way of life. Indeed, it is unlikely that even the chiefs and headmen whose marks appeared on the treaties completely comprehended their terms. Nevertheless, the Indians would soon

discover that the Americans considered the treaties to be their authority to force the tribesmen on to reservations and to keep them there.

During the decade after the negotiation of the 1867-1868 treaties, the Plains were in turmoil. In the face of United States' demands that they give up their freedom, and seduced by the promise of rations which became more and more appealing as the buffalo herds melted away under the relentless killing of the white hide hunters, bands began to trickle into the agencies. But others clung desperately to the old life. Every summer they would be joined by reservation Indians who had tired of the scanty rations provided them and resented the constant pressure to substitute the white man's way of life for their own familiar and cherished customs. The insistence that they begin farming was particularly objectionable to men who regarded such activity as, at best, fit only for those tribes not capable of nomadic plains life, and at worst, a gashing of the earth's surface which bordered on sacrilege.

But each year it became more difficult to live the old life. The buffalo herds were rapidly disappearing, and army patrols were more numerous. The soldiers seldom were able to overtake the more mobile Indians, but they could harass the warriors and their families and keep them moving. It reached the point that all tribesmen off a reservation might be considered hostile and subject to attack without warning. Camp equipment and tepees abandoned by fleeing Indians were destroyed at a time when it was becoming much harder to get new buffalo hides to make tepee covers. Nor could a warrior hope to quickly replace the pony herd seized by troops. These animals which had made the Plains life possible were either shot - and herds of as many as a thousand were so disposed of - or given as rewards to other Indians serving the white men as

scouts. Not only were traditional enemies happy to play this role, but even members of bands that had settled on the reservation were persuaded to trail other members of their own tribe trying to preserve their free way of life.

By the late 1870s the Plains Indians no longer had the capacity to resist. In a decade of fighting they had scored some successes. The Sioux and Cheyennes, following such able leaders as Crazy Horse, Red Cloud, and Two Moon had forced the abandonment of the Bozeman Trail forts in 1868. In 1876 they first drove the soldiers from the field at the Battle of the Rosebud and then killed over half of the Seventh Cavalry Regiment on the Little Big Horn. In hundreds of skirmishes the warriors demonstrated their ability to inflict losses disproportionate to their own and to outmaneuver the more heavily armed enemy.

Over the decade, however, the Plains Indians' capacity to resist steadily declined. They faced a growing enemy strength while theirs eroded. Factors already mentioned contributed to Indian defeat. A lack of racial, even tribal solidarity, meant that at no time was all Indian manpower arrayed against the invaders. Indeed, at any given time the enemy columns were most likely being guided by other Indians, and not necessarily from tribes hostile to those being pursued by the troops. Crazy Horse of the Oglala Sioux, Horseback of the Comanches, and Grey Beard of the Southern Cheyennes were typical of Plains chiefs whose final surrender was hastened by the aid provided the troops by their fellow tribesmen. Finally, the slaughter of the buffalo by the hide hunters in the 1870s struck at the mainstay of the Plains Indian's existence; the nomadic Indian and the buffalo were inseparable.

The experience of other western tribes that attempted to defend their homelands was depressingly similar. In 1846 the Navajos suddenly found themselves being told by American officers that they were now under the jurisdiction of the United States and should give up immediately their long standing custom of raiding Pueblo and Mexican villages. At the time the Navajos lacked any semblance of a tribal government and their less than 10,000 people lived in many small communities, seldom larger than two hundred people. The Navajos subsisted by farming and grazing - and by raiding. The last was an important part of their economy and provided them with additional sheep and horses, as well as captives who might be sold, ransomed, or assimilated.

The Navajos had difficulty comprehending American proscriptions against raiding. The Indians had been at war with the Mexicans for generations, and the Americans had been so recently. That the Americans wished peace with the Mexicans seemed little reason for the Navajos to give up a long and profitable practice.

Nevertheless, a few Navajos were found to affix their Xs to the white man's treaties calling for a cessation of raids against Pueblos and Mexicans. Most Navajos were not even aware of the existence of the treaties, and few of those who were felt themselves bound by them. The raiding continued under leaders like Manuelito, only now the Navajos had to avoid patrols and punitive expeditions operating from new American posts established deep in Navajo territory. The soldiers frequently were guided by Utes, Pueblos, and even Navajos.

. As the fighting accelerated the Navajo losses rose. An attack in 1860 by an unusually large force of 1,000 warriors, on the principal United States post in Navajo country, was unsuccessful. Navajos also were losing people to raiders, hundreds of Navajos ending up as slaves in Mexican and Pueblo settlements. Then the Navajos in 1863 and 1864 had to contend with soldiers that penetrated to the heart of Navajo country, invading Canyon de Chelly where they destroyed the cornfields and peach trees upon which the families depended. Intimidated by the show of strength, thousands of the Indians gave up further resistance and submitted to a three hundred mile trek east, the notorious "Long Walk," to incarceration on the Pecos River. For three years they suffered under military rule, and over 2,000 died from a smallpox epidemic. Meanwhile, some managed to elude their guards and make it back to Navajo country. They were joined in 1868 by survivors of the Pecos River experiment, after the Navajos had pledged to live on a reservation and abandon their raiding.

The Navajo resistance had not been as protracted as that of the Plains warriors. As farmers and herdsmen they had been more vulnerable than the buffalo hunters. And like them, the Navajos suffered from a lack of tribal cohesion and their long standing hostilities with neighbors ensured that the soldiers had no difficulty recruiting Mexican and Indian guides.

Other tribes in the Southwest had their homelands invaded by the whites in the 1840s and 1850s; some resisted only relatively briefly, although others defied the Americans into the 1880s. The Apaches provide examples of both extremes, the Jicarilla resistance ending in the 1850s while some western Apaches were still fighting as late as the 1880s. In general, the Apaches persisted longer in their struggle to maintain their independence than did the

Navajos, for several reasons. The Apaches had never developed the dependence on agriculture and stockraising that at the same time had raised the Navajo standard of living and made them more vulnerable to hostile armies. Apacheria, their homeland, had terrain even more rugged than that of the Navajos, discouraging invaders. Moreover, Mexico to the south offered the Apaches further opportunities for refuge if hotly pursued.

The Apaches had not been as disturbed by the Spanish presence in the Southwest as they would be by the American. No permanent Spanish settlements had been established in Apache country, and the sheer number of those Europeans in the Southwest was nothing compared to the relative flood of Americans in the 1850s and 1860s.

The initial contacts of the Apaches with the Americans resembled those of the Navajos. The Apaches likewise considered themselves at war with the Mexicans and were evaluating the Americans as potential allies. By 1850 the usual treaties had been drawn up and the Apaches began to learn that the United States not only would not join them against the Mexicans but expected them to give up the raiding which was a part of Apache lifestyle. The Apaches were willing to recognize that the Americans had defeated the Mexicans and therefore had the right to dictate to Mexicans. They could not comprehend, however, how that gave the United States the right to dictate to Apaches.

Then the Apaches became acquainted with that most persistent of intruders, the white prospector. Reports of gold in Apache country attracted those men who knew no boundaries and respected no rights. When Mangas Coloradas of the Mimbreno Apaches protested their incursions, he was badly beaten.

The prospectors, however, were only the beginning. The Apaches also had to contend with ranchers who began to operate on Indian land without so much as a by-your-leave. And government agents displayed the usual facility for obtaining pieces of paper complete with the marks of Indian leaders which purported to give the Americans the right to develop lines of communication through Apache territory.

It was the beginning of over thirty years of Apache efforts to protect their homelands from white trespassers. As always, the level of violence ebbed and flowed and at no time were the Indians able to combine against the enemy. They fought not as united tribes but as members of particular bands of the several western Apache tribes. Apache heroes of that long war included Mangas Coloradas, Cochise, Victorio and Geronimo of the Chiricahuas.

Mangas Coloradas was a big, powerful man whose mental assets were as impressive as his physical ones. He had convinced Mexican authorities of his military skills long before the Americans asserted their claims to the Southwest. When American miners stormed through the country of the Mimbrenos in the early 1860s, Mangas rallied his fellow tribesmen and drove most of them out. He failed in an effort to ambush an army column in fabled Apache Pass near the boundary of southern Arizona and New Mexico, and within six months Mangas would be dead. According to an eyewitness, a white man, he had been captured by soldiers violating a flag of truce, and then tortured into sufficient resistance to rationalize the soldiers shooting him.

Apache Pass was in the territory of the Chiricahua Apaches whose chiefs included Cochise, an ally on occasion of Mangas. Cochise was driven to

hostilities against the Americans by a matter of mistaken identity. Americans blamed his band for an attack actually made by other Apaches and when troops seized some of Cochise's people as hostages, he retaliated. Another cycle of violence was underway, one that would pit the Chiricahuas against the white intruders for the next twenty-five years. In 1872 Cochise was able to negotiate a lull in this bloody business when he agreed to locate his people on a reservation which was at least a part of the region they always had called home. Two years later Cochise died, and leadership of the Chiricahuas passed first to Victorio and then to Geronimo.

Throughout the 1870s the western Apaches were under pressure to remain on reservations and undergo the American version of a civilization program. Some Chiricahuas resisted this fate more vigorously than others, and the strong willed and independent looked to Victorio for leadership. For three years he led a band, fluctuating in size but seldom exceeding 250 people, back and forth across western Texas, New Mexico, and eastern Arizona. The Apaches consistently outwitted, or simply out marched, the troops pursuing them. If the Americans came too close, Victorio would head for the mountains south of the border. In 1880 this ultimately proved his undoing when a Mexican force trapped his band in a canyon and almost all the Apaches were killed or captured. Victorio himself died, presumably the victim of one of the Indian auxiliaries of the Mexicans.

In the early 1880s Geronimo emerged as the most able of the Apache freedom fighters. Like many other Apaches he had found the reservation regimen intolerable and fled to the mountains. But the odds against the Indians were mounting. The white population of Arizona doubled in the early 1880s and the troops were not only more numerous but toughened and experienced by the constant

campaigning. Moreover, Apaches off the reservation now knew that their pursuers probably would be guided by fellow tribesmen who had taken service with the United States.

During the last four years of Apache resistance, there was a bewildering succession of events as parties of Indians would be driven to the reservations, only to have some of them slip away again. Nor was Mexico the refuge it once had been now that the Americans had obtained Mexican consent to pursue Apaches deep into the Sierra Madre mountains of Chihuahua. Nevertheless, even a small Indian force could do damage as a party of about a dozen warriors led by Geronimo's brother Josarie demonstrated. The Apaches in a month traveled an estimated 1,200 miles, killed 38 people, seized 250 horses, and totally baffled hundreds of pursuers before retreating south of the border.

But with each campaign those Apaches prepared to risk everything to maintain their freedom were fewer in number. Many of the bravest died in battle, others were finally driven to the point that they accepted the futility of further resistance. Geronimo was in the latter category, finally surrendering in 1886. His last campaign indicated the impracticality of further resistance. Geronimo's band, including women and children, numbered only thirty some people, while there were upwards of five thousand troops with orders to kill or capture them.

The Apache wars appeared even more violent than most such hostilities. Fighting for their very existence, the Indians had to be implacable. Nevertheless it was the whites, both soldiers and civilians, who were guilty of the most flagrant acts of treachery, and examples abound. The Camp Grant

Massacre, in which nearly a hundred Apaches were killed and many Indian children seized to be sold into slavery, was perpetrated by a mob of Tucson settlers supported by Papago Indians. The victims had been attracted to Camp Grant by the promise of rations and protection by troops. Cochise's inveterate hostility stemmed partly from the murder of Apaches who had been persuaded to appear for a peace conference. On another occasion white settlers had invited Indians to talk peace and then had killed them with poisoned food.

The experience for tribes more sedentary than the Apaches varied. To the east, the Pueblos of the Rio Grande Valley fared better than most Indians in the Southwest, although they too lost land. Generally speaking, the Americans agreed to recognize the village boundaries which had existed under Spanish and Mexican rule. The Indians, however, had traditionally grazed their livestock on large areas adjoining their cultivated fields. With the influx of Americans into the region after the Mexican War, much of that land use would now be denied the Pueblos. Moreover, lumbermen overcutting timber in the Rio Grande watershed contributed to floods which destroyed fields farmed by the Indians from the days before the Spanish entered the valley.

The legislature of New Mexico Territory had recognized Pueblo village existence, but in California the rights of the Indians were dismissed cavalierly by the new state government. In 1850 there were approximately 100,000 Indians in the new state of California. About sixty tribes were represented and their cultures varied greatly, from the Indians of northern California whose lifestyles closely resembled those of the coastal tribes of the Pacific Northwest, to the southern tribes with obvious links to the Pueblo cultures of the Southwest.

Several things combined to render ineffective Indian resistance to the American occupation of California. The great cultural differences among the tribes and the absence of any real tribal governments meant that Indians choosing to resist seldom were able to mobilize more than a few freedom fighters. In addition, the Indians had been demoralized by developments in the period of Mexican control of California. In the mid-1830's the secularization of the missions had cast adrift 15,000 Indians, and in the interior the tribes were being pressed by Mexican settlers interested in expanding their ranchos or capturing additions to their work force. Meanwhile, diseases the whites had introduced into the region were taking a heavy toll, by one estimate five times the number killed by the Mexicans.

Thus it was an already tragically weakened Native American population which, after the Americans acquired California, was then faced with an even greater threat. In 1848 the non-Indian population of California had been less than 10,000; by 1850 it exceeded 100,000 and settlers and miners were penetrating every area of the new state.

The unique California experience of bypassing the territorial stage of government only complicated matters for the Indians. Territorial governments were dominated from Washington and took relatively more seriously their obligation to protect the rights of the Indian population. The white Californians, however, almost immediately obtained statehood and the tribesmen suffered more as a result. One early state law provided that Indians could be indentured to white employers for extended periods of time. The result was at best peonage, and was frequently little better than slavery when Indian women and children were kidnapped and sold to white settlers.

Indian resistance to this and other white abuses was sporadic. They would burn a barn here, steal cattle there, and occasionally kill a settler or miner. These acts of defiance would be met by punitive expeditions that would exact revenge out of all proportion to the "crime." Frequently these operations were conducted not by disciplined forces of the United States Army, but by militia units or local posses whose members had the typical citizen's contempt for Indians and complete disregard for their rights.

Those Indians who were willing to locate on the few reservations hastily established in California did not find the peace and security they had been promised. Settlers, with the connivance of reservation employees, were constantly encroaching on the land set aside for the Indians. Rations and supplies designated for the reservation inhabitants were diverted to other channels by corrupt agents. Meanwhile, disease was taking a terrible toll.

Under multiple blows, the fabric of Indian political and social life gave way. A half century of American control saw the California Indian population steadily decline until it was less than one-fifth of what it had been in 1848. Genocide is a term of awful significance, but one which has application to the story of California's Native Americans.

North of California, the Indian populations initially welcomed the white traders because of the tools and other goods which improved Indian living standards. By 1800 the tribesmen had developed regular commercial relations with the "Boston men," as they referred to the Americans, and with their rivals, the "King George men." Within two decades the interior tribes also had been brought into contact with traders and trappers and their societies began to show

some of the same improvement in standards of living as the Plains tribes had experienced after the acquisition of horses and firearms.

The Chinooks discovered the dangers of the new relationships. They had flourished as middlemen between American and British traders, and tribes more remote from the coast. But around 1830 the Chinooks fell prey to one of the diseases imported by the whites and were virtually exterminated as a tribe.

The situation changed abruptly for the worse for all the tribes of the Northwest in the 1840s. First Americans began to occupy the Willamette Valley and move north towards Puget Sound. Then the Indians had to contend with the whites lured to the region by reports of gold.

The first tribes to be attacked were those in southern Oregon, after they were mistakenly blamed for depredations committed by people to the south of them. In 1853 the Rogue River Indians resisted briefly and then were required to accept a treaty locating several of the tribes on a single reservation. As some of these tribes were traditional rivals, few Indians actually took up residence on the reservation.

Indians who found themselves within the newly established Washington Territory had problems of their own. They quickly became acquainted with the peremptory demands of a territorial governor that they sign treaties, surrender most of their land, and gather on reservations. These reservations were usually located east of what had been the homes of the tribes and were comprised of land less well watered and timbered, and not as plentifully supplied with game and fish. Moreover, the tribes again were expected to share a few reservations,

regardless of longstanding inter-tribal rivalries. At the treaty councils the Indians seldom spoke with one voice. Among the Nez Perce, for example, most tribesmen strongly opposed assignment to a reservation and Old Joseph and Looking Glass were among their most effective spokesmen. Other Nez Perce, however, accepted the leadership of Lawyer who was convinced that resistance was not a viable option. As usual, the white man finally obtained treaties which purported to show that the tribes had ceded large areas of land and had agreed to move to reservations.

Pressure on the Indians to move coincided in 1855 with new gold strikes in the Northwest. More whites began to invade the area and some Indians were driven to resist. The Rogue River Indians fought until overwhelmed and the survivors were forced onto a reservation. Concurrently, the Yakimas and their allies put up a real battle to hold their homelands, although the steadily mounting white power in the region proved too much for them. Pressed by the brutal local militia, who were backed by United States Army regulars now armed with rifled guns which outranged the muskets and bows and arrows of the tribesmen, the Indian resistance faded. In the process the tribes had lost some of their best leaders, among them Owhi, chief of the Kittias, and his son Qualchin.

Owhi was a chief whose prestige extended beyond his own tribe, and his determination to not give in to the whites had helped mobilize other Upper Salishans for the struggle to maintain their independence. When further resistance proved futile, Owhi turned himself in only to be told that his own safety depended upon his persuading his son Qualchin to surrender. After Owhi

accomplished this, the army officer to whom Qualchin submitted had the son hanged. The distraught father was then killed while attempting to escape.

With the exception of the Modocs and the Nez Perce, the tribes of the Northwest ended their resistance with the campaigns of the 1850s. In 1873 intolerable conditions on a reservation that the Modocs were forced to share with larger and unfriendly tribes led some of them to slip away under the leadership of Keintpoos, better known among the whites as Captain Jack. Keintpoos led his people back to their ancestral homeland, and the fugitives took shelter in a ten square mile area covered by lava deposits. The very rough terrain abounded in caves and ready-made trenches making it ideal for defense. With only about sixty warriors, Keintpoos kept at bay for seven months an army which at its peak numbered nearly a thousand. At one point hostilities gave way to negotiations, only to have the Indians kill two of the white delegates. But the whites took a terrible vengeance. When the Modocs were finally forced to surrender, four of them, including Keintpoos, were found guilty by a military tribunal and hanged. Then the heads of the four were severed and sent to the Army Medical Museum in Washington. The surviving Modocs were exiled to Oklahoma where the descendants of some of them live today.

The Nez Perce, who in 1877 fought one of the last Indian wars for independence, were members of several bands of that tribe which had for years refused to move to a reservation in Idaho. Under mounting pressure from the United States, they had at last reluctantly agreed to leave the land they loved. Enroute to the reservation, however, young men broke from the main body and killed three settlers who had committed crimes against Indians. Other warriors, assuming that the whites as usual would react on the premise of collective

guilt, vented their spleen by additional attacks. Troops were sent against the main Nez Perce encampment, but the Indians drove them off. Undecided what next to do, the tribesmen heard conflicting counsel from their chiefs.

Looking Glass, a veteran of many expeditions to the buffalo country east of the Rockies, urged the Nez Perce to head in that direction with the object of seeking refuge among the Crows or retreating north to Canada as Sitting Bull had done the previous year.

With severe punishment and banishment to a reservation as the alternative, the eight hundred Indians began a 1500 mile retreat that took them over some of the ruggedest trails in the Northwest. Pursued by four detachments of troops, the Nez Perce under the leadership of chiefs like White Bird, Young Joseph, and Looking Glass managed to beat off their attackers in several early engagements. The discovery that Crow scouts were serving with one of the army columns ruled out refuge with that tribe as a Nez Perce option. That left retreat into Canada and the Indians were about thirty miles from that sanctuary when they were surrounded by troops led by Cheyenne scouts. During intermittent fighting over a period of a week, Looking Glass and many other Indians were killed. About three hundred Nez Perce, including White Bird, managed to slip through troop lines and escape into Canada. The remainder of the Indians who had survived the long retreat were surrendered by Joseph, who concluded the negotiations with his poignant, "From where the sun now stands, I will fight no more forever."

There remained only one major effort by Indians to resist by armed force the domination of the United States, the 1879 struggle of the White River Utes. In 1868 Utes had been subjected to one of the treaty proceedings with which the

Plains tribes were becoming so familiar. Seven bands gave up all their land claims and received title to a reservation which covered the westernmost third of Colorado Territory. There were the usual provisions for the Indians to begin farming, to send their children to school, and otherwise to completely transform their mode of living.

For a few years the Utes continued to hunt and roam over the area much as their ancestors had done. Then prospectors infiltrated the reservation and found silver in the San Juan Mountains. Other white men poured in and, unable to keep its own citizens off Indian land, the United States extorted another land cession from the Utes. By 1878, the Utes at White River agency had settled onto a smaller reservation. During that year, this northernmost of the two Ute agencies, had to contend with a new agent who proposed an immediate transformation of the Utes from hunters to farmers. In the space of a year Nathan Meeker had driven the White River Utes to the brink of armed rebellion. When Chief Canavish protested the agent's having ordered a plot of grazing land prepared for plowing, a pushing match ensued and Meeker reported he had been "assaulted." He called for troops to be sent to the agency. Ute warriors, understandably frightened at the prospect of what the troops might do, fought them to a standstill when they approached the agency. Meanwhile, other Utes vented their fury on Meeker, his family, and other agency employees. The men were killed, and the women and children taken captive.

Within a few weeks the Army had mobilized almost four thousand troops, some arriving from distant posts by railroad, to contend with the less than 1,000 Ute men, women and children enrolled at White River. Utes from other bands, including the celebrated Ouray who had represented the tribe in earlier

negotiations with the white men, interceded and helped arrange a surrender, thus avoiding even more bloodshed. The ending was as familiar as the events which had led to it; the Utes were forced to cede almost all of the reservation in Colorado and retire westward to a less desirable tract in Utah Territory.

The Ute War of 1879 was the last major reenactment of a tragic scenario played out many times in the period 1848 to 1886. First the Indians of a region would be subjected to invasion of their territory by small parties of whites who killed the game upon which the Indians depended, or drove the tribesmen from the best fishing sites. Other white men would appear to seize land for farming settlements. Faced with Indian resistance - threatened or actual - the United States would arrange treaty negotiations. What almost always resulted was a document that few Indians involved could have understood, but which nevertheless committed them to surrender most of their ancestral homeland and locate on a reservation where they would be badgered to give up cherished ways.

Such treaties were powerful weapons in the hands of the white man who used them to give an aura of legality to the dispossession of the tribes. Time and time again these scraps of paper were invoked to justify policies abhorrent to the Indians. If they then resisted, they were portrayed as violating agreements freely agreed upon.

Indian resistance when it did occur was usually doomed to defeat for the variety of reasons previously mentioned. Indian societies produced an abundance of individual heroes prepared to die to defend their homes and their families, and many tribal cultures assigned the highest status to the warrior. Never-

theless, the tribes lacked effective political unity and their members were unwilling to submit to the discipline which would enable them to carry on protracted campaigns. Indians paid more than lip service to individual freedoms. This latitude given tribal members, however, meant that rarely would all those capable of fighting be willing to do so at any given time. There was no machinery by which a majority could commit all to a course of action. Chiefs could only lead by example, they did not have real authority over members of their bands. They held their positions of honor on the sufferance of their fellows and had little power to discipline. A common response of chiefs to complaints of whites about the conduct of their warriors was the plaintive, "We cannot control our young men."

If individual tribes had difficulty mobilizing all their bands on a particular course of action, and band chiefs rarely could produce all their warriors to meet a threat, it is not surprising that all tribes of a region would be incapable of closing ranks against the white invader. In such a situation traditional rivalries with neighboring tribes took precedence over what was the much greater threat of the white man. Troop columns commonly went into battle led by scouts from rivals of the tribe the troops were fighting. Nor was it rare for members of one band of a tribe to take service against other bands of the same tribe. This phenomenon of Indians supporting soldiers against other Indians was as old as the first wars of the seventeenth century.

And there were other factors which explain how the West was lost. The Indians' capacity to resist also was eroded, as the example of the Plains Indians dramatically illustrated. The whole nomadic way of life of those Indians, which made them such elusive targets for the troops, became impossible

with the slaughter of the buffalo. Life could be just as desperate for Indians driven from traditional fishing or gathering sites, drastically diminishing their capacity to resist.

Wars are determined, however, by more than weaknesses. The ultimate victor brings strengths to the contest which cannot be matched. Population was a major factor and the disparity between the numbers of whites and of Indians steadily widened with the passing years. To impress chiefs and headmen with the futility of opposing the millions of whites with their more advanced technologies, the United States pursued a policy of taking Indian leaders on junkets to Washington. Spotted Tail of the Brule Sioux, and Ouray of the Utes, were only two of many chiefs who returned to their tribes convinced that successful resistance was impossible.

The enemy also strove to deny to the Indians the means to continue to fight. Disarming and dismounting the hostiles, was standard policy for the army in this period. The thousand ponies the troops killed in 1875 helped end one Comanche resistance. Requiring the surrender of ponies and weapons by Crazy Horse's people when they came into the reservation in 1877 severely restricted their chances of fleeing again to the plains.

Finally, the rapid expansion of the railroad network multiplied the effectiveness of the available U.S. troops. The speed with which forces were mobilized against the White River Utes in 1879 demonstrated that.

Again, what is remarkable is how quickly the West was lost, given the individual abilities of the warriors, and the willingness of so many to give

their all for freedom. Few people have had a better cause for which to fight than did the inhabitants of the West from 1848 to 1886, but the odds against them were too great.

FOR FURTHER READING

The best general history of the Indian wars in the West is to be found in two volumes by Robert M. Utley. They are Frontiersmen in Blue: The United States Army and the Indian 1848-1865 (New York, 1967), and Frontier Regulars: The United States Army and the Indian 1866-1891 (New York, 1793). Dee Brown, Bury My Heart At Wounded Knee: An Indian History of the American West (New York, 1970), was a pioneer effort at a survey of the wars from an Indian perspective. For the role of those Indians who acted as scouts and auxiliaries for the troops, see Thomas W. Dunlay, Wolves for the Blue Soldiers (Lincoln, 1982).

The Plains wars were not the most protracted, but they have been the most written about. Besides the volumes by Utley and Brown, there are a number of valuable studies of particular Indians or particular tribes. Father Peter John Powell, People of the Sacred Mountain: A History of the Northern Cheyenne Chiefs and Warrior Societies 1830-1879 (San Francisco, 1981), is a Cheyenne view of their past. For an Indian version of their victory on the Little Big Horn in 1876, see John Stands In Timber and Margot Liberty, Cheyenne Memories (New York, 1967). Mari Sandoz, Crazy Horse (Lincoln, 1961) is a successful effort to recreate the life and times of that great Oglala Sioux chief. His rival for primacy among the Plains Sioux is the subject of James C. Olson, Red Cloud and the Sioux Problem (Lincoln, 1965). For the Indian role in the warfare on the Southern Plains, a good starting point is Donald J. Berthrong, The Southern Cheyennes (Norman, 1963).

A valuable survey of the history of the tribes of the Southwest is Edward H. Spicer, Cycles of Conquest: The Impact of Spain, Mexico, and the United States on the Indians of the Southwest, 1533-1960 (Tucson, 1962). Among more specialized studies is Frank McNitt, Navajo Wars (Albuquerque, 1972), which deals with that tribe's response to invasion. For the Apache resistance to the Americans there are several possibilities, and among the best are two works by Dan L. Thrapp, The Conquest of Apacheria (Norman, 1967), and Victorio (Norman, 1974). Geronimo, another Apache chief, has been fortunate in his most recent biographer, Angie Debo, Geronimo: The Man, His Time, and His Place (Norman, 1976).

For the California Indians, a good point of departure is Edward D. Castillo, "The Impact of Euro-American Exploration and Settlement," in Volume 8 of the new Smithsonian Institution Handbook of North American Indians (Washington, 1978). The volume also contains articles on the culture and history of the state's individual tribes.

An excellent introduction to the tribes north of California is Robert H. Ruby and John A. Brown, Indians of the Pacific Northwest (Norman, 1981). For the wars of particular tribes, two widely used sources are Keith A. Murray, The Modocs and Their War (Norman, 1959), and Alvin M. Josephy, Jr., The Nez Perce Indians and the Opening of the Northwest (New Haven, 1965). The standard work on the Ute War of 1879 is Robert Emmett, The Last War Trail: The Utes and the Settlement of Colorado (Norman, 1954).

Comment on William T. Hagan, "How the West Was Lost"

by

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As Professor Hagan has described, American Indians in the western United States lost in less than forty years a significant portion of their land. A lack of effective political unity, a rivalry among the tribes and disruption of tribal economies, combined with the numerical and technological strengths of the invaders to force massive changes in the lives of Indian communities. While some of the specific details may not be recalled, it is a generally familiar story to all of you. It is a chronicle traditionally ended with the tragedy of Wounded Knee on the 29th of December of 1890. Sometimes we might pair that awful event with another image from the same year: the ending of the frontier, as declared by the Superintendent of the Census.

If it is familiar fare, what do we do with it? How can we avoid the usual caricature? How does it fit into essential themes and questions within the teaching of United States history? Building upon Hagan's concise and thorough synthesis, I would like to attempt to raise several matters for your consideration.

During the decade I taught at the University of Wyoming, I used to remind my non-Indian students that, while some of their ancestors had been pioneers in the region, Indians, after all, were the original pioneers. The Anglo-American past in so much of the American West is so recent. It is important, I think, for our students to appreciate

how recent has been that intrusion and how rich and complex the Indian past of our region has been. Rather than perceiving the Indian past as something completely foreign to or apart from their heritage, I try to encourage my non-Indian students to think about whether there are common elements within that experience. Recognizing differences that are both apparent and real, are there also commonalities which all of our students may consider in their study of American history? Not surprisingly, I think that the answer is yes. Allow me to provide a few specific examples.

One would be that of immigration and migration. During the thousands of years before Columbus, a time that so we often mislabel "pre-history," Indian peoples came to America and began to confront the challenges inherent in survival on the continent. That process of adaptation and experimentation, as Francis Jennings reminded us in The Invasion of America, made a difference to the eventual process of EuroAmerican expansion. Too often historians have presented the aboriginal America of the 1400s as a great void, when the presence of Indians altered dramatically what happened to Cortez or to the Puritans. Except for the obligatory bow in the direction of Sacagawea (indeed often perhaps giving her more credit than would be her due), we also view the West of the 1840s as largely unpopulated. When the Indians appear, it is to harass the wagon trains, frustrate the missionaries, and deal with that man who graduated last in his class at West Point. It is almost always the Plains Indians who stand out, chasing the buffalo, and counting coup. They are completely nomadic, moving resolutely every night to a new location with the women doing all the work.

There are all sorts of problems with those prevailing images, to be sure. But there are limitations, too, to the kind of understanding we apply to the people who came west who were not Indians. The writers of too many of our U.S. history textbooks are urban people. They do well when they write about urban immigrations. They describe the grime of industrialism, the horrors of turn of the century sausages. They do less well when they try to describe a land and a process that, I suspect, is much more foreign to them. They may have flown over Cheyenne or seen cowboys in the movies. But they struggle to capture something now so removed from their everyday life.

And for our students, an increasingly urbanized lot, we must struggle, too, to convey the remarkable achievements of those people who came to the West. In a broader sense, we have included western history, which encompasses western Indian history, and the stories of success and failure that are a part of it. Here Eleanor Pruitt Stewart, Mari Sandoz, John Ise, and others can help portray that remarkable time.

We need, as well, to include the changing status of Mexican-Americans in that half century that followed the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. While being sure that we address the situation of American Indians, we need to think about how people of Hispanic heritage, especially in California and Texas, were deprived of their land and their rights. What about the farms and ranches that were seized and the stubborn though generally unsuccessful resistance to that process? Who remembers Vicente Peralta and the origins of Oakland?

For all who were here or came here, from the exiled to the Exodusters, the question of land use and ownership or control loomed. In an article published in Agricultural History in 1964, Robert F. Berkhofer, Jr., reminded us of the cultural baggage brought by immigrants to America. Land ownership could be traced from medieval times as central to who one was. While not all who came West wanted to be farmers or ranchers, a great many did, and saw in that frontier environment a final opportunity to regenerate their fortunes. For that great prize, the land, enormous hardships could be endured. That land also represented a hope for one's children, a priceless legacy to be passed on. A century later, we forget that not all those pioneers made it. Their dreams dwindled in many instances; their small homesteads often were absorbed by more powerful neighbors who had their own, larger aspirations.

That matter of power concerned the Indians, too. Richard White's brilliant essay, "The Winning of the West: The Expansion of the Western Sioux in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries," shows us how there were two expanding forces within the Plains: the United States and the different Sioux nations. Having largely escaped the smallpox epidemics of the nineteenth century, spurred by a steady demographic growth, the Sioux moved as far west as Wyoming. While some peoples such as the Cheyenne and Arapaho formed alliances with the Sioux, out of necessity perhaps as much as any other reason, other smaller tribal communities faced direct threats to their very existence. Such gatherings as the Fort Laramie Treaty Council of 1851 represented evidence of Dakota dominance, as members of such weaker

groups as the eastern Shoshone were kept by the Sioux from attending. It is hardly surprising that in the next generation leaders such as Washakie would seek compromise with the United States in part out of a need to gain protection against the Teton Sioux. We thus need to see resistance as taking a variety of forms and to know that survival of one's people could dictate different strategies other than military ones, depending upon one's circumstances.

White's article emphasizes that for Indians of the era war meant more than glory. It meant power and it involved territory. Though generally not reckoned in terms of private property, the land could be lost or gained. And it included features that took on economic, social, or religious significance. The Black Hills are usually cited here as an example, but they represent but one of many cases in point. The loss of a special place or places could prove devastating. Fortunate were people such as the Navajos who, after four years of incarceration in east central New Mexico, were to regain a portion of their former homeland.

Since I have a particular interest in Navajo history and because they do provide us with an instructive example, let us turn for a few moments to their experience. Professor Hagan discusses the Long Walk, the signing of their treaty at Fort Sumner in 1868, and their return to their home country to join their countrymen who had evaded capture by Kit Carson, James Carleton, and others four years before. The original reservation created for them comprised a rectangular shaped domain of about three and a half million acres on either side of the

boundary line that would later divide Arizona and New Mexico. Through the experience at Fort Sumner and in the first years of the reservation, the Navajos were dealt with as a unit by the federal government. Having shared a common experience, they increasingly saw themselves as one people. The Navajo Nation traces its origins to these times.

The Navajos also were able to add substantially to their reservation land base during the remaining years of the nineteenth century. Combined with more additions from the following century, the Navajo reservation would swell to about four times its size in 1868. Following the trauma of the Long Walk and imprisonment, the Navajos began to adjust to a new life in old surroundings, rapidly increasing their herds of sheep and discovering prosperity at a time that we tend to equate only with loss and despair. Even though Kit Carson and James Carleton would be remembered bitterly, the first years of the reservation would generally be cherished in the tribal memory.

And while the Navajo example is remarkable, it is not unique. We have usually focused on confrontation in this period to the neglect of examining what happened to Indian peoples following the wars or what happened to Indian peoples, such as the Hopi or Papago, for example, who were less engaged militarily with the Anglo-Americans. This imbalance suggests that United States history may give greater weight to Indian history when the latter includes conflict with the frontier population or with the federal government and less so at other times. Internal efforts at economic development, political

institutionalization, and so forth, even if successful, may yield far less attention.

1886 does, nonetheless, mark an important symbolic and real point in the history of Indian-non-Indian relations. The final surrender of Geronimo in September of that year and of Mangus during the following month can truly be said to note the end of major armed campaigns. The Geronimo surrender was just commemorated earlier this month in both Arizona and New Mexico. As the venerable C.L. Sonnichsen observed in a piece published in September's Arizona Highways, Geronimo has undergone a transformation over the decades. Perceived as "a bloody-handed murderer" by White settlers of his day, "Geronimo the Wicked" remained a man described as "treacherous, slippery, and without honor" until even after World War II, when his name was adopted by the paratroopers. Now, Sonnichsen, born about 15 years after Geronimo's surrender, assures us that what he terms "sentimentalists" such as Forrest Carter in the 1978 novel, Watch for Me on the Mountain, have raised the Apache leader "to the level of Moses and George Washington, and even higher": "the Apache Messiah."

Be that as it may, the memory of the man and his time burns brightly for the Chiricahuas. It may be one hundred years ago, but as Dave Warren would say, that it happened is more important than when it happened. The memory endures, as do the people. The recollection of resistance and defeat of another century may help to allow resilience and survival in the next. Who would have thought, after all, a century ago that tribal allegiances would remain, that languages would

live, indeed that new traditions would emerge?

For me, there are at least two lessons that one might take from this era. I have alluded to both in the course of my remarks. The first is that Indians did survive as Indians. What it would mean to be an Indian would in some ways change during the next century, just as what it meant to be an American, for example, would change. We still need to learn more about that transitional time in American Indian history, from the 1880s through the 1920s, in which that survival was ensured through the determined, if largely unnoticed, efforts by Indian people. We are making some headway in that direction as historians, but we have a long way to go.

Second, it is well for us to recognize that history may be circular as well as linear. As I have tried to argue in an article published this summer in Arizona and the West, non-Indian cattle ranchers played a crucial role in dispossessing Indians of their land in many areas of the West. In turn, Indians often became cattle ranchers in an effort to use their reservation lands. In turn, now, non-Indian cattle ranchers may be compared to yesterday's Indians. They are surrounded by a society that does not understand them, does not appreciate their culture, and has other priorities for their land. They are now a very distinct minority in this urbanized country of ours, even if their stubborn nature and ties to a particular landscape may permit at least some of them to make it into the twenty first century. It should remind us and our students about some of the unexpected commonalities history may provide. It seems to be a point

well worth pondering as we meet in this urban environment, home of the largest urban Indian community in the United States, a century removed from Nelson Miles, Geronimo, Skeleton Canyon, and open range.

#### Suggested Readings

Acuna, Rodolfo, Occupied America: A History of Chicanos, 2nd ed. New York, 1981.

The first half of the book reviews land loss in the 19th century.

Bailey, Garrick and Roberta Glenn Bailey. A History of The Navajos: The Reservation Years. Santa Fe, 1986.

A new synthesis of Navajo history, emphasizing social, economic, and cultural issues.

Berkhofer, Robert F., Jr., "Time, Space, Culture, and the New Frontier." Agricultural History, 1964.

An influential article, stressing the role of culture in the settlement of the West.

Dinnerstein, Leonard, et al. Natives and Strangers: Ethnic Groups and the Building of America. New York, 1978.

A valuable survey of ethnicity and American life. Indians are included in this analysis.

R. David Edmunds, editor, American Indian Leaders: Studies in Diversity. Lincoln, 1980.

The chapters especially related to 1848-86 are devoted to Satanta, Washakie, and Sitting Bull. Additional chapters on Quanah Parker, Dennis Bushyhead, and Carlos Montezuma carry the story forward to the 1920s.

Fite, Gilbert C., The Farmer's Frontier, 1865-1900. New York, 1966.

A good survey of migration and agricultural change during the this time period.

Hertzberg, Hazel W., The Search for an American Indian Identity:

Modern Pan-Indian Movements. Syracuse, 1971.

An important work on early 20th century pan-Indianism, stressing adjustment to the new era.

Hoxie, Frederick E., "From Prison to Homeland: The Cheyenne River Reservation Before World War I," South Dakota History, 1979.

An example of a reservation community beginning to establish itself in the first years of the new century.

Ise, John. Sod and Stubble. New York, 1926.

An account of everyday life on a German immigrants' homestead in Kansas.

Iverson, Peter. Carlos Montezuma and the Changing World of American Indians. Albuquerque, 1982.

A biography of a Yavapai M.D., a leading activist in the later 19th and early 20th centuries, and a portrait of changing conditions for American Indians.

Iverson, Peter, "Cowboys, Indians, and the Modern West." Arizona and the West, 1986.

Relations between non-Indian and Indian cattle ranchers during the past century, exploring commonalities and differences between the two groups.

Jennings, Francis. The Invasion of America: Indians, Colonialism, and the Cant of Conquest. Chapel Hill, 1975.

A provocative inquiry into Indian-White relations. See, for example, Chapter 10, "Pioneers."

The Journal of Arizona History. Spring, 1986.

A special issue, edited by C. L. Sonnichsen, commemorating the surrender of Naiche and Geronimo.

Roessel, Ruth, ed., Navajo Stories of the Long Walk Period. Tsaile, Arizona, 1973.

Oral histories of the era compiled in a book published by the Navajo Community College Press.

Sandoz, Mari. Old Jules. Boston, 1935.

A biography of a Swiss immigrant farmer and a study of the people of western Nebraska farming frontier in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Sonnichsen, C. L., "The Remodeling of Geronimo." Arizona Highways, September, 1986.

A review of the changing image of the Apache leader.

Stewart, Elinore, Fruitt, Letters of a Woman Homesteader. Boston,  
1914.

The letters of a Wyoming woman homesteader. Used as the basis  
for the recent movie, "Heartland."

John D. Unruh, The Plains Across: The Overland Migrants and the  
Trans-Mississippi West, 1840-60. Urbana, 1978.

A sweeping survey of travel to the West, including a revisionist  
interpretation of Indian-White relations on the trail.

Richard White, "The Winning of the West: The Expansion of the Teton  
Sioux in the 18th and 19th Centuries." Journal of American  
History, September, 1978.

An impressive analysis of Teton Sioux expansion, including a  
re-examination of Indian responses to changing conditions.

714-55-01

"What Moves-moves":

The Literary Presence of Native/American History

by

Kenneth Lincoln

American Indian Studies, UCLA

The Great Plains

Here on the plains noon is an ache of light.

The midday sun oppresses pioneers

Of busted sod. What went wrong?

Was it too much space? Broken

Fences rope the wind as men would

But can't. Can the lonely come home

Again? We gain old space, lose time,

And sleep when the light is most intense.

Wild-eyed cattle mill around the water tank.

Acrid cigarette smoke jolts

The old man awake. "Where's she gone,

Lady luck, filly, my young sunflower?"

\*Some of this material appeared in earlier versions of Native American Renaissance (University of California 1983).

I

"Sending A Voice"

Among the Lakota on my native Northern plains, "sending a voice" to the extended world called the mysterious powers that move all things. A singer, that is, an oral poet, would "send" words to the powers of the world. In 1915 James R. Walker wrote to Clark Wissler in the Bureau of American Ethnology: all Pine Ridge Lakota medicine people, when asked about their "God," concurred that "Skan was the sky, and was also a spirit that was everywhere, and that gave life and motion to everything that lives or moves. Every interpreter interpreted Taku Skanskan as 'What Moves-moves,' or that which gives motion to everything that moves."

This power to move the moving world, vast as the sky itself, can still be petitioned through the Niya, or "life-breath," a personal aspect of Taté, the Lakota "wind." White Buffalo Calf Woman walks with "visible breath" bringing the pipe to the people. It is a tribal variant on what the Southwest Navajo call "holy wind." Red Bird sang a Lakota Sun Dance Prayer sixty years ago which Frances Densmore translated as:

Grandfather,  
A voice I am going to send  
hear me  
all over the universe  
a voice I am going to send.  
Here me,  
Grandfather,  
I will live.

I have said.

Densmore also collected in Teton Sioux Music (1918) a "Song of Sitting Bull," who had been assassinated two weeks before the 1890 Wounded Knee Massacre:

A warrior

I have been.

Now

it is all over.

A hard time

I have.

The ethnomusicologist never met Tatanka Iyontanke and she did not speak Lakota; she recorded and musically transcribed the "as-told-to" song as three eight-syllable lines in a descending "minor" scale.

I-ki-ci-ze wa-o<sup>n</sup> ko<sup>n</sup> he

wa-na he-na-la ye-lo he

i-yo-ti-ye ki-ya wa-o<sup>n</sup>

A more accurate, syllabic, indeed "poetic" translation (including the metaphoric reference to the warrior/healer figure of the bear, nicknamed wao<sup>n</sup>ze, in the final lyric, wa-o<sup>n</sup> or "to know how") might be the following:

I wanted to be a warrior

and now it is all over so

I know to bear against hard times.

Such issues of translation--culture to culture, oral to written words, past to present history, one tongue to another, religion to secular contexts--endlessly complicate debates over Native American

"literatures." Scholars from folklore, anthropology, linguistics, literature, history, music, drama, religion, philosophy, sociology, law, and art contradict and cross-pollinate through debates over translation in American Indian Studies.

By "sending a voice" the world's powers are called, prayed, chanted, ceremonialized, even reasoned with or admonished. These daily rites of language align with the passage of sun, moon, stars, planets, animals, winds, and seasons; they are ritualized in visions, winter counts, peoples, and timeless generations of spirits. Such are the "grandfathers of grandfathers," Black Elk says, and "grandmothers of grandmothers," passed on, passing on. These "voice senders" make up tribal cultures, past and present.

A conception of the human voice drawing power, waka<sup>n</sup> or "holy-mysterious," in the Lakota presence of "What Moves-moves," underlies some five hundred original Native American cultures, now expressed in literary translations. And this regard for a human voice of power remains pan-Indian, as does the sweatlodge or healing power of sage, despite relative differences over time and degrees of acculturation by Native Americans to modern, non-Indian ways. The Kiowa writer N. Scott Momaday envisions Native American "carriers of the dream wheel":

They are old men, or men  
Who are old in their voices,  
And they carry the wheel among the camps,  
Saying: Come, come,

Let us tell the old stories,  
Let us sing the sacred songs.

Thus any "Indian" literary history spans older oral traditions--crying for vision or recounting deeds of honor, telling tribal stories or chanting personal songs, making medicine or entreating the spirits, retelling the communal past or foretelling the future--over the long cultural odyssey of some forty thousand years into written contemporary poetry, fiction, essay, drama, and treaties. Anita Probst, the Yaqui poet, calls to Indian elders:

It is the month of Green Corn;  
It is the dance, grandfather, of open blankets.  
I am singing to you  
I am making the words  
shake like bells.

"I do not know how many there are of these songs of mine," Orpingalik told Knud Rasmussen sixty years ago among the Netsilik Eskimo. "Only I know that they are many, and that all in me is song. I sing as I draw breath." Vital as breath itself, the oral literatures of native cultures lie deeply rooted in America; they whisper a native past behind and beneath the recent windstorms of words that have swept the Western Hemisphere. The Navajo still speak of an "in-standing wind" as a person's soul, expressed in breath and voice, much as the word "spirit" still traces back to a concept of breathing. And so radically diverse languages, life-styles, mind-sets, ecologies, and histories have survived thousands of years "native" to the Americas. Perhaps the people can be imagined even

farther back, "older than men can ever be--old like hills, like stars," as Black Elk dreams his tribal ancestors. Archeology on the American Indian dates back at least 44,000 years, possibly to Asiatic migrations across the Bering Straits; tribal origin myths speak of an ancient emergence from this land as "native" Americans, "born" here from "time immemorial," as the Pueblos say.

By official count, 315 "tribes" remain in the United States alone, where once four to eight million peoples composed five hundred distinct cultures speaking as many languages. The working definition of Indian, though criteria vary state to state, is minimally a quarter blood and tribal membership for federal acknowledgment. Roughly 700,000 Native Americans now live as "bloods" (or approximate "traditional" full-bloods, to use the reservation idiom), mixed-bloods whose parents derive from different tribes, and "breeds" or half-bloods with one non-Indian parent. Another half million or more partially blooded Indian people live as non-Indian whites. Over half of the Indian population, counted at 1,418,195 in the 1980 census, now lives off the fifty-three million acres of federal reservation lands. There are clearly new definitions of Indians in the making.

America's most diverse native minorities are officially considered "domestic dependent nations," nations within a nation, whose members are legally entrusted "wards" of the federal government. Yet Indian nations remain technically "sovereign" and occupy separate land bases, salvaged from the 140 million acres allotted under the 1887 Dawes Act. This federal legislation sought to "civilize" the

natives by making them land-holders (more to the point, land-sellers--two-thirds of their remaining lands quickly slipped away after the Allotment Act). Treated as children of a paternal overseer, Indians were legally cast in the role of primitives who could not grow up; they answered as centuries-old prodigals to the Great White Father.

Five centuries ago a misnamed, misperceived "Red Indian" entered Euroamerican thinking as a stereotype from Medieval "wild man" imagery, grafted on a New World Caliban. "You taught me language," the native monster swears in The Tempest, "and my profit on't / Is, I know how to curse. The red plague rid you / For learning me your language." According to visual images from a 1505 German woodcut, the "Indian" foraged about naked, promiscuous, bestial, befeathered, militant, lawless, godless, and (most misperceived) cannibal. "They also fight with each other," claimed Amerigo Vespucci in Mundus Novus. "They also eat each other even those who are slain, and hang the flesh of them in smoke. They live one hundred and fifty years. And have no government." Roger Williams by 1643 was recording "by what names are they distinguished": "Natives, Salvages, Indians, Wild-men, (so the Dutch called them Wilden), Abergeny men, Pagans, Barbarians, Heathen." The savages also had "their Names, which they give themselves" (A Key into the Language of America). It might be noted that over a hundred tribes referred to themselves variously as "the people" (Arikara), "real people" (Cherokee), "the flesh" (Zuni), "men of men" (Pawnee), "first people" (Biloxi), or "people of the real speech" (Winnebago), as Vine Deloria, Jr. documents in God Is Red (1973).

With a cannibal "fascination of the abomination" four centuries into Conrad's Heart of Darkness, Euroamerica set about adopting a dark surrogate son, a wild child--"Ca-Caliban"--stuttering Caribbean lingual bastard of the Renaissance. The tag names mutated: Cannibal, Caribbean, Caliban. "This thing of darkness," Prospero concluded for Shakespeare, "I acknowledge mine."

Yet "to be an Indian in modern American society," Deloria writes in Custer Died for Your Sins (1969), "is in a very real sense to be unreal and ahistorical." The transparent warrior "Indian," a stereotype today of film and fiction, lingers more as a native silhouette--the only minority American anonymously enshrined on our currency, the "Indian-head" nickel, now an artifact and subject of plays such as David Mamet's American Buffalo (1976) and Arthur Kopit's Indians (1969). And the true history of national Indian affairs shapes an oftentimes bitter native resistance to "the American way." When America sets out to eradicate or relocate five hundred cultures, catches the shadow of aboriginal peoples on its money, and names professionally competitive teams the Warriors, the Indians, the Redskins, or the Aztecs, not to mention machines like the Cherokee, the Pontiac, and the Winnebago, or the battle cry "Geronimo!"--the stereotype reaches down through a sentimental myth of the noble savage into what William Carlos Williams called "the bloody loam" of national history. "You laugh at my enthusiasm for savages, as Voltaire laughed at Rousseau for wanting to walk on all fours," Johann Herder wrote a friend in 1778, during the French and American revolutions. "Know then, that the more savage, that is, the more alive and freedom-loving

a people is (for that is the simple meaning of the word), the more savage, that is, alive, free, sensuous, lycially active, its songs must be, if it has songs." Or, more popularly, as voiced by the lead cinematic Yuppie of Lost in America, "We've got to touch Indians."

The Indian warrior, officially warred against by American military from 1789 until 1890 (the Bureau of Indian Affairs was established under the War Department in 1824), refracts an image that covers several million lives destroyed or violently "removed" from their native earth. This has been "the longest war in American history," Peter Nabokov says (Native American Testimony, 1978). And today, there seem "so few of them left," Frederick Turner observes in his North American Indian Reader (1974), "so far away from the centers of population." This, too, is open to debate, since the majority now live near or in American cities.

These native peoples remain many in ancient diversities; they stand mythically large in the national consciousness. We would do well to appreciate their ancient and re-emerging literatures as origins of cultural history in America, the bedrock to our civilization.

## II

### "Now Day Indi'ns"

Being Indian today, what my Lakota brother calls a "now day Indi'n," can mean living uneasily among white people, south of the

tracks in poorer sections of American towns, or in city ghettos; holding a job, going to school, even college; staying sober enough to function like anyone else in white society, where alcohol is the social anodyne; and mixing white ways with Indian ways. George Lone Wolf remembers his mother, Jennie, an Oglala Sioux medicine woman: "You take Mom, now, she was a good Catholic, an' she had her Indi'n medicine, ya know, some of both." Indians can be Christian and still pray with a medicine pipe, or even take peyote to see Christ in the Native American Church ceremonies. They can ride the Manhattan underground and go to an Iroquois sweat lodge; or run a small business in Phoenix and attend a Navajo Beautyway ceremony for eight and a half days in a spirit hogan on the desert. The ceremonies offer a healing suspension of ordinary time, out of the everyday sense of things.

These new mixtures of being "Indi'n" (or American) are no less "native" than changing conditions ever left peoples in North America. Scandinavian farmers on the Great Plains, Greek steel mill workers in East Chicago, Black field hands in Louisiana, and Russian Jewish shopkeepers in Los Angeles do not surrender ethnic definitions over a few generations. Indians are even more ethnically self-contained, often living apart and seeing themselves as "first" Americans, rooted in aboriginal cultures and ancient history.

Being Indian may mean adjusting one's definition to the tribal reality, rather than living nostalgically in a mythic past. A Cherokee nowadays uses Carnation milk cans as leg rattles in a stomp dance, and this Cherokee dancer is no less "Indi'n" than ancestors one

hundred years ago, removed from Appalachia to Oklahoma under presidential decree and military escort, who used turtle shells for rattles. Degree of Indianness is not measured by any refusal to adapt, or by scarcity of organic materials; it is distinguished more by the spiritual significance of the ceremonies, as witnessed and infused among tribal peoples. If Chickasaws or Papagos relocate in Los Angeles, where 5,000 so-called "Gabrielino" natives once camped by the "Bay of Smokes," they bring their Indianness with them, redefining tribalism. Good medicine is good medicine, wherever and however practiced.

Human time, place, and culture are carried through cyclic evolutions that never stand still. For the September Feast of San Esteban, an Acoma Pueblo can climb 600-year-old cliff stairs 400 feet above a 7,000 foot New Mexico valley of squash, beans, red peppers, and fruit orchards. There in the Sky City, the Acomas traditionally dance Pueblo rituals in ancient costume, pray for the balance of rain and sun and crops, eat old-time oven bread, and drink water at one time carried on the heads of elder women in beautiful, old potteries. Next day they can drive to the modernized Pueblo suburb of Acomita in the valley below, where the people farm, run markets, work livestock, or even commute down Interstate 70 to Albuquerque.

It is the threat of discontinuity that challenges Indians today: how far the changes will go, how drastically they will alter tribal ways longstanding. The young people, in large part, do not speak the Indian languages of their elders. Some of the ceremonies have gone

underground or been abandoned. Medicine people may be disputed. Sometimes the old people are forgotten. The land has been mapped, allotted, subdivided, fenced, tracked with rights-of-way, and "developed" in non-Indian commercial ventures, as in South Dakota cattle leases, or in Four Corners coal mining, or in Southwest water rights. The animals have been killed back, the forests cut down, the prairies plowed up, the rivers damned and diverted. Natives live in the wake of an invasion of land-grabbing, gold-feverish, buffalo-slaughtering immigrants who brought the railroad, guns, plows, fences, plagues, alcohol, and the Bible. The West wasn't wild, Luther Standing Bear complained, until the whites invaded native homes. Indian people were removed, pitied and shunted to out-of-the-way wastelands as endangered species, left to their own demise, relieved of their natural resources.

Though their lands today contain half the uranium and one-third of the strip mine coal in the United States (the coal alone worth over a trillion dollars) many reservations suffer the worst living conditions in America--incomes at half of the poverty level, five years average schooling, the highest national alcoholism and suicide rates, substandard housing and social services, tuberculosis, diabetes, and infant mortality in multiples beyond any other minority in the country, resulting in average lifespans of less than fifty years. So in spite of some positive collaborations, there also runs a deeply bitter history under Native America, inherited for better or worse by Indian writers. It is what James Welch calls "winter in the blood," a questionable "thanks"-giving.

For the majority of some million and a quarter variously defined Indians in America, being Indian involves not just the traditions or catastrophes served up on a buffalo chip of history, but a conscious set of choices. The issue is what to fuse of the new and the old, improvisations and continuations from the past. Indians shear sheep and drive the sick to Public Health Service hospitals, plant corn and collaborate on native language curricula, attend powwows and go to college, make native arts and learn modern business techniques for economic growth. These present-day peoples believe in themselves as Indians and act on that belief, within their own definitions. They realize themselves within a sense of Indian community and tribalism. Their Indianness is communally granted and personally carried out, as the old ones carried time down to where it is.

Being Indian, from Acoma to Pine Ridge, Tahlequah to Tacoma, Wounded Knee to Old Oraibi, upstate New York to down-home Ohio, is doing something about defining oneself Indian. It can be working with Headstart children or bringing goods and concern to the old ones, and staying to listen to their wisdoms. It can be telling new and old stories, singing and dreaming poems, and writing things down for all of us. Being Indian is as much behavior and attitude, life-style and mind-set, as a consequence of history or blood-line. It means placing people above the possession of things, checking individual gain against the communal well-being--not taking too much, not tolerating degradation.

A Yuwipi healer told his people, gathered in a Lakota ceremony the summer of 1981 at Wakpamni Lake, Pine Ridge Reservation: "We're gonna make it as we go along, generation to generation, addin' on an' addin' on."

### III

#### A Language of the Tribe

A new literary interest in Native America has developed since the early ethnology and folklore of almost a century ago, then laying the grounds for archaeology, anthropology, and linguistics. Anthologies of traditional song-poems, dream visions, narrative cycles, speeches, and life-stories illustrate the remarkable variety and depth of literatures in hundreds of tribal cultures, from George Cronyn's The Path of the Rainbow in 1918, with which Luis Borges began his American literature surveys, to Margot Astrov's The Winged Serpent (1946), A. Grove Day's The Sky Clears (1951), Jerome Rothenberg's Shaking the Pumpkin (1972), and most recently Brian Swann's Song of the Sky (1985) beside the Ortiz/Erdoes collection, American Indian Myths and Legends (1984). The old ceremonial literatures celebrate life in this land, as translated from a Navajo Night Chant by Washington Matthews:

In beauty I walk,  
With beauty before me, I walk,  
With beauty behind me, I walk,  
With beauty above and about me, I walk,  
It is finished in beauty,  
It is finished in beauty.

In the last decade at least thirteen traditional anthologies alone and more than twenty contemporary volumes of Indian literature have appeared.

A number of America's leading writers have found a need to "go native," from colonial times to the present: Thoreau dying with the word "Indians" on his breath, novelists such as Cooper and Melville, Faulkner and Hemingway, Berger and Kesey, to contemporary poets Hugo, Snyder, Merwin, Rexroth, Olson, Levertov, Bly, Rothenberg, Creeley, Kelly, Wright, Berg, Simpson, Wagoner, Swann, Norman, Tedlock, and Forché. These American writers have sought a more integral relation to this land or "turtle island," as the Iroquois say; an artist's uses among "the people"; a tribal language and participant audience in some context of reciprocal art; and raw material in the myth and history and imagination of America from its origins. These artists seek to reinvent, on their own cultural terms, an original relationship to the spoken and sung word, a sensitivity to spirit of place and natural environment, a ceremonial bond with a tribal audience.

"Not for himself surely to be an Indian," Williams wrote in In the American Grain, "though they eagerly sought to adopt him into their tribes, but the reverse: to be himself in a new world, Indianlike." American writers cannot assume to be Indians; but they can translate, discover, or rediscover, analogously with Indians, their own cultural family and place in this American earth. It is a matter of gathering the tribes, as Carolyn Forché implies, placing ourselves in a common time and place, adopting one another anew,

locating our common and particular roots. It is a personal act of imagining our shared cultural history in America.

A Native American renaissance, then, less than two decades of published Indian literature, signals a written American renewal of oral traditions, now translated into Western literary forms. Howard Norman recreates Cree oral texts tellingly in The Wishing Bone Cycle. Usá Puyew usu wapiw: "I go backward, look forward," the Cree historian Jacob Nibènegenesábe or Slowstream says, "as the porcupine does." Contemporary Indian literature is not so much new, as it is recreatively translated, thus "re-born" as the word "renaissance" means. The misnomer "Indian" now ironically binds diverse native peoples, several thousand tribes all over the Western Hemisphere, first glossed by Columbus as one mythical subgroup. "The conquest of America," Tzvetan Todorov writes, "heralds and establishes our present identity...We are all descendants of Columbus."

So American Indian writers today step into the bicultural "forest's edge" that once designated treaty-making between older peoples of the wood and newer settlers of the clearing. Now most Indians speak English as a first language, integrate in some degree into America life, despite reservations, and learn of other cultures and Indians, as well as relearn their own cultures. The center of an urban powwow these days is one Indian drum with many singers, the "All Nations" drum. Some 80,000 Indians live in Los Angeles, over 202,000 in California, one and a half million in the United States, and

approximately sixty million in the Western Hemisphere. They share at least one common bond: "native" America.

The commitment to a common tribal voice--a "Native" American access to the cultural sources of literature in daily song and story--remains ancient and on going. Art is not on the decorative edges of Indian cultures, framed in galleries or glassed in museums, but alive and functional at the heart of cultural life: in blankets that warm common bodies, potteries that store food, songs that invoke power, stories that bond people, ceremonies that heal, and disciplines that strengthen. It is what Octavio Paz calls the "art," useful and beautiful, of "a mutually shared physical life." Translations of these arts, in particular song-poems, may hang mobile in space like the leaves on a tree. They may serpentine through a Hopi rain dance in stately choral strophes, arrange themselves in a Navajo origin myth as patiently as strata in a canyon wall, or burst freely around Plains drumming and chanting. They may lap quietly as lake ripples beaching on a Chippewa shore, or stalk powerfully through darkness over a broken Iroquois terrain. They may soar with the Trickster Raven over the Pacific Northwest, or descend into themselves, as kachina gods disappearing into kivas.

The potential for distinguished literature, emerging from a supportive culture and literary tradition evolving from oral to written forms, is extremely high in Native America, perhaps higher than in any other enclave of American culture today. The writings by younger Indians are infused with physical family ties--elders talking

"stories" knowledgeably, to relatives who care. Simon Ortiz, for example, regards a storied native language as an Acoma "way of life," not just a writing tool, "a trail which I follow in order to be aware as much as possible of what is around me and what part I am in that life. I never decided to become a poet. An old-man relative with a humpback used to come to our home when I was a child, and he would carry me on his back. He told stories. My mother has told me that. That contact must have contributed the language of myself" (The Man to Send Rain Clouds, 1974).

A story-backed old Acoma man gives Simon Ortiz eyes and voice as a child, narratives that touch and are carried for life: words incarnate, flesh-and-blood ties, an embodied imagination. All artists seek this cultural heritage. And the tribal backbone extends through ancestors who carry history in their bodies, natural and immediate as a boy's remembered "language of myself." N. Scott Momaday perches on his Kiowa grandmother's back in a family photograph gracing The Names (1976). Alfonso Ortiz speaks of his San Juan Pueblo childhood, leading a blind grandfather around standing rainwater. Leslie Silko recalls her Laguna great-grandmother, Marie Anaya, watering morning glories and telling Pueblo tales. Today those stories give "form in bone and muscle" to Ceremony (1977), Silko's first novel. Here the old Laguna medicine man smells "like mutton tallow and mountain sagebrush. He spoke softly, using the old dialect full of sentences that were involuted with explanations of their own origins, as if nothing the old man said were his own but all had been said before and he was only there to repeat it" (Ceremony).

## Native American Renaissance

Most of the one hundred or more published Indian writers today were born since World War II. A generation before them, Ezra Pound and associates prepared a non-Indian literati for a new organic nativism: the eidetic image, the musical cadence, the intrinsic song of spoken language, the visionary passion that charges words with meaning, the non-formalist rediscovery of art in things. Mallarmé intoned over Poe's tomb, "donner un sens plus pur aux mots de la tribu," and Eliot thought to "purify the dialect of the tribe" in Little Gidding, while back home Williams doctored an American diction, "the language of the tribe." Across the "Big Water" Dylan Thomas, too, played out his native wildness in Wales: "On my haunches, eager and alone, casting an ebony shadow, with the Gorsehill jungle swarming.... I felt all my young body like an excited animal surrounding me.... There, playing Indians in the evening, I was aware of me myself in the exact middle of a living story, and my body was my adventure and my name" (Portrait of the Artist as a Young Dog).

When Indian writers began to emerge in the 1960s--Momaday, Welch, Ortiz, and Silko as leaders--they were recognized outside the great traditions of Western literature as neo-primitive or "native" American artists. They, in turn, were shaped by what they recognized or relearned from contemporary art, as though both cultures had made a complete circle back into their origins. Paula Gunn Allen, Laguna Pueblo poet-novelist-and-critic, says that she could hear "Indian"

premises in Pound's direct and clear diction, in Williams's search for a native idiom, in Gertrude Stein's firmness of line, in Olson's eidetic sense of the "glyph" or picture-word, and in Allen Ginsberg's chanted, even "howled" poetry (coyote prowls the edges of every American culture). Joyce's Ulysses, an experimental hybrid novel with an archeological premise, inspired this woman from a "confluence" of Euroamerican cultures to write of her own "breed" in The Woman Who Owned the Shadows (1983) and Shadow Country (1982). And the converse of modernism holds: Pound's musical arguments for literature, poetry to song to dance, make cross-cultural sense to Indians versed in performance and tribal ceremony. Literature now is no longer strictly formal, à la vers libre, but form in some American measure shaped by context and native experience: "intrinsic" (Williams), "projective" (Olson), "organic" (Levertov).

America's "native" literatures emerge from a sense of grounded traditions, a tribal sense of culture, steeped in systems of relatedness. To Indians, tribe means family, not just bloodlines but extended families--clan, community, ceremonial exchanges with plants and animals and spirit powers--and an animate regard for all creation as sensible and powerful. Westerners call this "nature" or how we are "born", and relegate it to pastoral romanticism. Yet "What-Moves-moves" reciprocates natively and ideally among us all. To the northern Cree, animals are called "other-than-human persons." The Ojibwa reference totem means "my fellow clansman," indicating an interrelated universe. Lakota means "allies," and Iroquois "we-the-people." The concept of Tribe carries an earth sense of self, housed in an earth body, with

regional ties in an ecology of real, living things. Mother Earth and Father Sky are not metaphors so much as tribal beliefs, daily presences. The statename Oklahoma means "red earth-people," land of Muskhogean origins.

Tribe implies ancestral history, the remembered presence of grandmothers and grandfathers gone before, such that "home" comes to mean a sense of history. Tribe sets a sacred balance through inherited rituals and an ever present spiritual history, not "back there" in time, but continuously reenacted, even as a tribe changes form. Tribe requires sharing the basics of a human community, lean to fat, a catalyst to the creation of common bonds against suffering. And given four hundred years of Indian dispossessions, tribe often means non-white inversions of the American mainstream, the anti-dream of a contrary ethnicity and dark pride, even to a people's disadvantage.

The new Indians who are artists come together against the split-cultural enemies of ignorance and poverty, racism and greed; and still they see themselves as children of the old ways, fusions of historical transitions, teachers of contemporary survivals. In the last two decades, seminal writings have come from young Native Americans as they emerge from tribal settings, attend American schools and study formal literatures, and then go back to their own peoples, in country or in city, to write personal versions of native experience. The binding theme is the oldest plot in literature: homecoming.

History recombines racial lines, mixes cultures, and pushes tribes to the edges of urban limits and self-definitions. The people still struggle to come home. Some have newly broken through history's "primitive" and "savage" Indian labels. Native Americans have been honored by a Pulitzer Prize for Scott Momaday's House Made of Dawn; front page reviews in the New York literary circles for Silko's Ceremony; and critical enthusiasm across the country for the poetry and fiction of James Welch as a new Indian Steinbeck with Riding the Earthboy 40, Winter in the Blood and The Death of Jim Loney. Leslie Silko and Alfonso Ortiz have received the prestigious MacArthur Foundation awards, or better known "genius grants." Louise Erdrich in 1984 with Love Medicine won more literary awards than any novel in publishing history. It is the first in a tetralogy that will include The Beet Queen, about immigrant North Dakotans, Tracks, about the Chippewa past, and American House, about the mixed-blood present and future. She is completing, as well, a health study on foetal alcohol syndrome, The Broken Cord.

Harper and Row initiated a Native American Series in 1972 with Hyemeyohsts Storm's Seven Arrows. The series picked up Welch's first poetry and fiction, and in 1975 published a fifth volume, Duane Niatum's Carriers of the Dream Wheel: Contemporary Native American Poetry. The average age of these seven Indian women and nine men was thirty-one when the collection appeared, and a new native image--the educated traditionalist--began to surface. Indians did not have to fail in mainstream America to define their ethnicity; separatism was no longer the criterion for tribal identity. The war was ending. To

know workable talents and put them to use, whether as potter, hunter, poet, businessman, carpenter, professor, homemaker, or lumberjack, was not un-Indian, these cultural craftsmen and women argued by their own professional examples. Roberta Hill challenged in "Dream of Rebirth":

We stand on the edge of wounds, hugging canned meat,

waiting for owls to come grid

nightsmell in our ears....

Groping within us are cries yet unheard.

We are born with cobwebs in our mouths

bleeding with prophecies.

Wendy Rose went to touch her Hopi father, asking "who am I?" and pled with her Miwok mother, "please believe in me."

Pottery shards, splintered and dusty,

glued together by that which is spirit

--may it someday hold water--

In his whip-snaking, cross-rhymed verse James Welch defied White winter torpor:

The day-long cold hard rain drove

like sun through all the cedar sky

we had that late fall. We huddled

close as cows before the bellied stove.

Told stories.

Gladys Cardiff saw her poems cut through the world, "My song scythes over wet fields," while Roberta Hill looked back to Oneida:

I've grown lean walking along dirt roads,

under a glassy sun, whispering to steps.

Twenty years I've lived on ruin.

In Carriers of the Dream Wheel the traditional virtues still held, however tenuously, against a modern wasteland of imposed White values. The poets pushed back the nightmare, grounded the metaphor, sobered the vision-drunk questor, and called all home again to the family of the tribe. W. R. Ransom drilled a language of nights under figureless stars in "Critter":

Sat up all night and lugged at the moon.

Grunted. Nothing changed.

Sun rolled up the mountain

I could tell about

meadowlarks, finches

or dogwood and poplar,

madrones, cedar--

no, it was Orion I waited for.

Out West, Simon Ortiz instructed his Acoma children by way of "old water courses, in wind, / where your mother walked, where her mother walked." His story-poems brought back to life Coyote Old Man, the elders, the old ways, the new sorrows. Ray Young Bear found himself "Coming Back Home" as a Mesquaki to the touch of his grandfathers:

i pressed my fingers

against the window, leaving

five clear answers of the day

before it left, barking down the road.

Geary Hobson's The Remembered Earth: An Anthology of Contemporary Native Literature (1979) mustered the broadest cross-section of living Indian writers, 427 pages with 74 artists

grouped by geographical and tribal kinship. What this literary powwow skitter-stepped in terms of sustained technique was compensated by bringing together talents, sentiments, causes, aspirations, and griefs, from reservation to off-reservation, urban to academic Indian. Many voices in varying media and maturity offered not only poetry and prose as literature, but a collation of tongues as a cultural renaissance. The writing ranged from folk, to politic, to journalistic, to poetic, to prosaic. Multiple forms among diverse perspectives reawakened the young Indians, gathering in clans among their elders, continuing with redefinitions. "It is a renewal, it is continuance--and it is remembering," Hobson opened the gathering. Everywhere energies were breaking through these experimental forms and generating an American Indian renaissance in print: idiomatic Indian voices from all parts of America, breed to blood, in prose essay, voice play, fiction, prose poem, novel-in-progress, free verse, rhymed and metered poetry.

v

Medicine For All

"Sunrise," ended my Native American Renaissance in 1983. Within the year Joseph Bruchac collected contemporary Indian poetry in Songs From This Earth on Turtle's Back, a state-of-the-art anthology that superceded previous collections. Richard Erdoes and Alfonso Ortiz freshly collated traditional tribal texts in American Indian Myths and Legends, the most complete gathering now in print. Raymond DeMallie validated the Black Elk transcripts in The Sixth Grandfather, and Vine

Deloria gathered commemorative essays on John Neihardt in A Sender of Words. Jarold Ramsey considered the classics of oral native literatures against Euroamerican masterworks in Reading the Fire, while Michael Castro's Interpreting the Indian tracked modern literary permutations of Indian materials. Simon Ortiz drew together the finest contemporary short fiction in a Navajo Community College anthology, Earth Power Coming. And Peter Matthiessen published two new books on Native American affairs, In the Spirit of Crazy Horse and Indian Country. All this came in 1984.

Native Americans are now writing prolifically, particularly the women, who correlate feminist, nativist, and artistic commitments in a compelling rebirth. "A sense of familiarity with what is strange, a willingness to face, to articulate what is beyond belief, to make it seem frightening and natural at the same time lies in much of the writing of American Indian women," Paula Gunn Allen forecast in "The Grace That Remains" (1981), a line borrowed from Roberta Hill, now married to the Arapaho artist, Ernie Whiteman. In 1984 this Oneida poet published her first book of quietly stunning verse, Star Quilt. Her lines stretched taut with blank verse rhythm, startling rhymes, musical consonance, and surreal spells of imagery:

We unstuck a walking stick walking  
down a wall and shoved it in a jar  
where it hung, a crooked finger.

Whiteman spoke with a disturbingly common, childlike intensity to her son:  
We're caught in some old story.  
I'm the woman winter loved

and you, the son of winter, ask  
where did he go and why.

This poem gets cut to just one sentence:

You grow old enough and I get wise.

It was "a quality of voice that guides me," Roberta Whiteman has said, and that native listening to one's own voice surfaced in Paula Allen's first novel, The Woman Who Owned the Shadows, as well as in Joy Harjo's poetry, She Had Some Horses and in Linga Hogan's Eclipse. Hogan reflected,

If I spoke  
All the birds would gather  
in one breath  
in the ridge of my throat.

Rayna Green edited That's What She Said, an anthology of sixteen American Indian women poets, while Gretchen Bataille and Kathleen Sands scanned the horizons of a renewed Mother Earth in American Indian Women, Telling Their Lives, all within 1984.

One new writer now focuses national attention, Louise Erdrich, a mixed-blood Chippewa from North Dakota. Love Medicine won the 1984 National Book Critics Circle Award for Fiction, and then the American Academy of Arts and Letters prize for the best first novel, coming with a companion set of poetry, Jacklight. A "wondrous prose song," claimed the New York Times, her writing probes the why and how of existence. Erdrich's Kashpaws, Lamartines and Lazarres of Turtle Mountain, North Dakota come like Faulkner's Caslins and Snopes tumbled into one Indian/White cracker dynasty in the turbulent guts of

America. Turtle Mountain remains the most densely populated of 315 Indian reservations--six by twelve miles of 10,000 mixed-blooded hill folks straddling the Candian border--near the exact geographical center of North America. "And so we stuck together on that strip of land that was once sun beat and bare of trees. Wives and children, in-laws, cousins, all collected there in trailers and more old car hulks. Box elder trees and oak scrub planted and grew up. We even had a gooseberry patch."

Three Kashpaw generations live out modern twists of an American epic in Love Medicine. In the beginning there is a girl, Marie, in deadly psychic battle with a cloistered nun, who scalds her for Jesus and rams a fork through her hand, raising the maiden to stigmatic glory and lifelong combat, only to be forgiven on the nun's fetid deathbed. And there is a man, Nector, who finds his wife in this virgin martyr, Marie, as he strides down home with geese tied to each arm and subdues her wildness, caught in loving her on the hill, then raising broods of kids, trying to leave her for a high school sweetheart, Lulu, sensual as melting butter, then burning down Lulu's house, only to be brought home by his own daughter to Marie's darkly waxed kitchen floor.

Characters find themselves locked in their pasts, determined by poverty, racism, religion, war on their own soil, the bizarre human condition forever fascinating and confusing--so they reach to each other, weeping, terrified, needy, murderous--and they touch, crumbling, unable to add up the price or the pieces, unable to draw

the pattern of things together. Indians, yes, Kashpaws go on in the special ethos of pride and defeat and survival, the estrangement of America's first peoples, reserved inside history, clawing their ways home, hanging on, making pies and waxing wood floors and hunting geese and wiring tractors together. They live much like the rest of rural working America, but with that added inflection of pain, desperation, humor, another aboriginal tongue and cultural heritage, and immeasurable enduring strength that is "native" American--the ache of native self-definition and going on, in the face of all odds.

"Society? Society is like this card game here, cousin", Gerry Nanapush says breaking out of prison. "We got dealt our hand before we were even born, and as we grow we have to play as best as we can." This political prisoner is modeled on Leonard Peltier, a Turtle Mountain Chippewa now serving two consecutive life terms in federal prison.

From first to last, beginning to ending snowfall, parts and peoples all relate through fourteen tales told by seven mixed-Indian narrators. These are voices of clan lineage gathering the ghosts of an extended Indian family, tattered in the unraveling warp and woof of American history. Each voice rings clear and resonant to itself, ragged and uncut, like a rough gem; the whole gathers and glitters as naturally polished stones in the bed of a Turtle Mountain stream.

Erdrich's Love Medicine records a raconteur's world, peopled in amazed pity and humor and deep sad joy, all in witness of simply, albeit complexly, being alive. Hers are not the expected

Indians--Sioux warriors, Hopi maidens, Yaqui shamans, Pueblo potters, or Navajo sheepherders--but miscegenated Metis who marry "full-blood" dirty-blond Norwegian teenagers from Rolla, North Dakota. There is little, if any, old-style ethnography in the fiction: no Chippewa chants, no ceremonies to the Great Spirit, no wizened old medicine people. Instead, there are pickups and bars and nuns and crazed uncles and fierce aunts and small issues of how "Indi'n" kin are, or aren't; but blood-lines and traditions and the "old ways" are not the overriding concerns of these people. Daily survival precedes cultural purism. What does not come with the terrain and times must tend to itself.

"Indian" is an idea of oneself, possibly, and "living Indian" goes on despite the idea, the way things are, not made up as Indians perhaps used to be, but Indians living who they are in the presence of history. They are heard in regional, "locally real" talk, as Clifford Geertz argues for an ethnography of cultural common sense in Local Knowledge. Each dialect cocks a different ear, each lip a different twitch, and tribes turn on differences. The "Mischief" or Metis today are mixtures, just as the narratives in Love Medicine portray a fine confusing mix of terror and pity, a near tragedy and rarely textured comic pathos, above all, the indomitable spirit of a regional community. As the South continued, fallen, still heroic in resistance to northern intrusions, idiosyncratic to itself and its history, so Native America, here in the northernmost Dakota, survived wars of removal and racism and cultural genocide. Indians have endured over one hundred years of reservation displacement, poverty, wasteland

economy, clan feuds, and desperate confusion over White/Red schisms and fusions--all with a knife-edge sense of comic continuity.

With a fine sense of humor, Louise Erdrich evinces a woman's compassion, understanding, even acceptance of the forgivably strange violence in human events. Hers is a mother's tolerance, if not affection, for what cannot be loved in human nature--the petty, mean, senseless, sometimes brutishly male and viciously female smallness in the face of vast natural forces and the flood of human history. Hers are the wasted and still life-willing survivors sung by Bruce Springsteen today in America, by Bob Dylan not long ago, by Muddy Waters and Lightnin' Hopkins yesterday, by Bessie Smith an age ago--but still indelibly "Indi'n," in this case, where we turn to Floyd Westerman, and Dennis Payne, and Buffy Saint-Marie, and even Johnny Cash, mixed-breed Cherokee, singing like gravel on the road to prisons and railways.

And still America surges on, west, south, north, the mixed flotsam and jetsam of the world, smack against Native Americans, clashing, warring, intermarrying, digging and cursing and trashing and blessing the land, until a writer like Louise Erdrich comes to the surface, cast up again to show us ourselves, as William says in the poem "To Elsie," revealing "the truth about us," Americans gone "crazy" back home, intermarrying with "a dash of Indian blood," a dream of September goldenrod, an excreted earth under our feet. In these "isolate flecks," these loved, damned, and bastard words, fallen to earth and sent skyward again, rise our love medicines, our offspring, our "native" Americas.

VI

Coming Home

To what end? More critically, how? "Understanding the form and pressure of, to use the dangerous word one more time, natives' inner lives," Cliff Geertz observes in Local Knowledge, "is more like grasping a proverb, catching an allusion, seeing a joke--or, as I have suggested, reading a poem--than it is like achieving communion." Can we use Geertz's method, a streets mart "advancing spiral of general observations and specific remarks," to move from the historical presence of literature toward an ethnography of modern American, even "Native" American, thinking? How translative, interdisciplinary, intersubjective or pluralistic are we willing to be before the genres blur into obscurity? Is there any hope for a unified cultural field in this country of relocatees? Are we all--academics, card sharks, and culture plumbers--self-enclosed specialists? Trapped in the infamous hermeneutical circle using words to define language, are we favoring our own biases to define cultural perception? When we come down to it, can we know our knowings? Is it worth writing about?

And secondly, is there such a "thing" as an American "native" ethnography that could be useful here? If "we are all natives now," as Geertz closes the gap between neolithic and nouveau, what are the differences and dynamics of interconnection today in Love Medicine, for example, that interpenetrate Native American and American "native" thought? How is this literature our history?

"Here I am, where I ought to be," Isak Dinesen wrote in Out of Africa, a generation after her Danish father in 1872 had lived with "les sauvages" in Wisconsin. Whether at home, coming home, or going to a home, "A writer must have a place where he or she feels this," says Louise Erdrich, on the other side of the globe in North Dakota. She speaks to an historical, homing sense of locus: "a place to love and be irritated with. One must experience the local blights, hear the proverbs, endure the radio commercials. Through the close study of a place, its people and character, its crops, products, paranoias, dialects and failures, we come closer to our own reality. But truly knowing a place provides the link between details and meaning. Location, whether it is to abandon it or draw it sharply, is where we start" (New York Times Book Review, July 28, 1985). After nine months we "no longer live beneath our mother's heart," the novelist remarks, so what "land" do we land in, belong to, or return to as "home"? How do we think and feel about all this? Are there regional, historical, even racial or cultural definitions and differences?

Our quest in the Western world, registered as far back as the Homeric odes three thousand years old, is one of the nostos or "homecoming," as Joyce recreated the myth on modern Irish terms Ulysses. Where we were born, both "native" and in a "natural" sense in what "nature," shapes the kind of "animal-person" we are, as the Cree say.

From the beginning of Love Medicine to the end, characters are coming and going home. June is the lost mother among all kinds of

other mothers--the churchly mother Leopolda in virginal rage, the adoptively maternal Marie in compassionate grace, the casually genetic Lulu in sensual salvation. June dies at the beginning to trigger all the stories, a feminist kind of Mary Magdalene as martyred Savior: "The snow fell deeper than Easter than it had in forty years, but June walked over it like water and came home." This would seem a three-in-one heroine: the crucifixion, temptation in the wilderness, and prophesied resurrection of Our Mother-of-the Earth. She is as locally specific to Turtle Mountain as juneberries in pies and junebugs in the sloughs. All this figures in one woman trans-culturally named as wife of the god-of-gods, Juno, Roman goddess of marriage and childbirth, a derivative of the Greek Hera, now designating springtime. This martyred-and-mythically-reborn adoptive "mother," known as Aunt June to the Kashpaw kids, walks over the spring Dakota blizzard "like water." Hers is a land of endless pockets and rivulets of natural springs, a land named for the turtled humps of hills called "mountains" along the Canadian border. In short, the goodess, the feminine who gives birth to all men, the "mother-of-us-all" as the Pueblos say, "came home" to be buried and regenerate in her surviving kin, her native clan.

At the end of the novel, June's true son Lipsha, known last of all to himself, drives his unknown father Gerry to the international border and "home free," after dealing himself "a perfect family" or royal flush in a hand of poker for June's Firebird. The sportscar was bought by June's other son King from her life insurance settlement. "I still had grandma's hankie in my pocket," Lipsha ends the story.

"The sun flared. I'd heard that this river was the last of an ancient ocean, miles deep, that once had covered the Dakotas and solved all our problems. It was easy to still imagine us beneath them vast unreasonable waves, but the truth is we live on dry land. I got inside [the car]. The morning was clear. A good road led on. So there was nothing to do but cross the water, and bring her home."

Crossing the water is an ancient real-and-imagined passage to another world, from Mediterranean sailors heading west after the sun, out of the gates of Gibraltar, to the rediscovery of our "new" world. The road to, the voyage across, the flight out, the journey beyond...these all imply "the way" to and from what we could call "home," a sense of beginning and ending as continuum and union. It is the on-going "odyssey" in Western literature--etymologically echoed in odometer, odium, and ode--the travel, trouble, and talk/tune of the "way home." And Lipsha's idiomatically inclusive phrase, "bring her home," is distinctly American, if I'm not mistaken; it conjures up a history of leaving home "east" and pioneering "west" across an uncharted sea of prairie. The men left city, family, dogs and cats behind--especially the women--and only recently has "mom" caught up with "dad." Revisionist historical thought, Sherman Paul observes, includes a native or primal "search for the primitive, which to a considerable extent is a search for the feminine," as witnessed in Frances Densmore's Teton Sioux Music (1918), or Mary Austin's The American Rhythm (1923), or Constance Rourke's American Humor (1931), or Louise Erdrich's Love Medicine (1984). We live in a time of trying to include--to readopt--the excluded, especially the feminine as dominated by the masculine in America.

Lipsha bringing "her home" ties down an old American myth, it occurs to me, and suggests something deeper about the Mother Earth from the thinking of Native America. It is a sense of place-that-we-call-home. It has to do with where we came from and where our ancestors are buried and where we are going to return: "across the water" of time or history to the earth itself, down into things, whether we are in motion culturally or traditionally in place, migrating or settling down, on-the-road-or-run out West or just parked in front of the t-v watching "Dynasty." It is a sense of belonging, Lipsha who thought himself to be an orphan says. It is knowing one's mothering-place, touching-in with hearth-and-home, honoring the traditional "woman's place." So to "bring her home" finally means belonging somewhere, the answered longing to be someplace; or to have that somewhere catch up with you; or accidentally to realize that it was always there, as Lipsha realizes. A migratory "here" is suddenly not "away from" home, but carried within in motion, as we were once carried beneath "our mother's heart," Erdrich reminds us. In some true sense, this is bringing home home through self-realization within one's tribal history.

This "homing" process turns on a sense of origin in a real historical place: a concept of family once or still there, an idea of extended kinship, a call to a particular region like a geographical magnet. It has never been easy, from Odysseus lost at sea among sirens, to Ishmael adrift, to Momaday's Abel running from war-torn LA toward a "house made of dawn." Welch's nameless Indian narrator admits in the hung-over opening of Winter in the Blood, "Coming home

was not easy anymore. It was never a cinch, but it had become a torture." Still, this authentic, honest voice knows Montana as his ancestral Blackfeet/Gros Ventre home: "It could have been the country, the burnt prairie beneath a blazing sun, the pale green of the Milk River valley, the milky waters of the river, the sagebrush and cottonwoods, the dry, cracked gumbo flats. The country had created a distance as deep as it was empty, and the people accepted and treated each other with distance.

"But the distance I felt came not from country or people; it came from within me. I was as distant from myself as a hawk from the moon." That last image, lyrically emblematic, focuses the story in a cultural icon, hawk distant against moon. Here the art of the ancient winter counts, those eidetic histories drawn on animal skins by plains Indians, tells everything in an image. Plains art is history, in this instance, primary and primal document.

In Southwest harmonies, Leslie Silko closes Ceremony with Grandmother Spider's patterns woven together in the breed/bastard/orphan life of Tayo, an emergent Pueblo cultural hero: "The ear for the story and the eye for the pattern were theirs; the feeling was theirs; we came out of this land and we are hers.

"In the distance he could hear big diesel trucks rumbling down Highway 66 past Laguna. The leaves of the big cottonwood tree had turned pale yellow; the first sunlight caught the tips of the leaves at the top of the old tree and made them bright gold. They had always

been loved. He thought of her then; she had always loved him, she had never left him; she had always been there. He crossed the river at sunrise." "She" is the immemorial mother, as Pueblos say, and this bridge is where Laura, Tayo's mother, crossed the river naked at dawn half a life ago, non-Indian inseminated with her son. The tribal "changes," Silko believes, have taken a century in the Southwest to reveal coherent patterns, genetic bridgings, and cultural fusions of Spanish, Indian, and immigrant blood.

So home is an historical place to belong, among one's people, genetic and adoptive. It includes a particular physical landscape, flora and fauna: all the leggeds-and-wingeds-and-roots, the seasons, weather, climate, sun, moon, and stars at given angles, and a lot else, most probably. Its direct line is genetic lineage or parentage, along with collateral kin, blooded and adopted; its leafy fringes are "bros" and "sisters" who for various reasons say they are, "step" or otherwise; its trunk reaches down beneath the "bloody loam" of earth-history to our ancestral "old ways." Its mystical reachings in Love Medicine, naturalistically, shine in the Northern Lights. "As if the sky were a pattern of nerves and our thought and memories traveled across it," Albertine beside Lipsha muses under "the drenching beauty" of the aurora borealis. "As if the sky were one gigantic memory for us all." And here June would be dancing "a two-step for wandering souls. Her long legs lifting and falling. Her laugh an ace." All this, Lipsha learns later through Lulu, gathers in "a knowledge that could make or break you." It's an old Oedipal gamble, cognate with the contrary wisdom of Old Man and Old Woman in Blackfeet creation

myth, modern as a broken marriage dramatized by Sam Shepard. Long after the war-shocked Henry Jr. has walked into a swollen river and drowned, Lulu often speaks her son's name: "I wanted him to know that he still had a home."

Specifically tied to a sense of home, our native son or liberty's daughter searches to know the cemetery of the past, the granary of the present and the schoolyard of the future: ancestors, working parents, budding offspring. Such is America's historical presence--past, present and future. At home, most closely, Americans of three generations gather in the kitchen, or until recently on the porch, where one can be both in-and-out of nature-and-civilization. The kitchen seems the locus of "home," the gathering place, where the women make pies, coffee, and talk, where Marie waxes her floor, where Nector stumbles back home. The novel opens here and closes by the river. Americans peel potatoes, bake berry pies, smoke cigarettes, gossip, build up and cut down one another, tell all kinds of stories, and generally do-America in the kitchen.

But we also love our cars and here we keep traveling in Albertine's black Mustang, June's blue Firebird, Henry Jr.'s red Oldsmobile, Lulu's tan Nash Ambassador. And the names are drawn mythically from American history: the wild mustang or Indian pony; the Aztec bird of fire, as with the "winged serpent" of the sun, Quetzacoatl; or the "old" way "mobile," the car-dad-drove-about. Whether Lakota or Los Angeleno, Americans are a mobile people, if anything, even at home. Add to these auto/mobiles the Thunderbird,

the Winnebago, the Cherokee, the Chief, the Pontiac. Indians and wild animals animate our motoring lexicon, Lynx, Wildcat, or Fury. It's a wonder there's no Ford Crazy Horse or Buick Sitting Bull.

All this, it seems, extends a cultural history of the frontier, which butted up against established Native American cultures, some in situ for thousands of years, other newly arrived, others traveling semi-nomadically and carrying home with them (variously as the North American geese, buffalo, or blue whale. For all of us it was, and is, a "quest" for home, a question of where to sink one's roots, and once down, how to stay, or if dispossessed, how to regenerate home. The theme of America might be the ancient and mythic origins of culture, the orphan-who-finds-a-family-back, the outcast adopted, the long trek home, as Erdrich further explores in her second novel, The Beet Queen.

Our conscious "ace" in the hole, our intellectual wildcard, our American twist in an ancient cultural paradigm of getting-back-home is seeded in June's laugh. Hers is a woman's throaty, singsong resilience that signals toughness, acceptance and forgiveness. It is her comic ability to survive, or if martyred, to be remembered well and have the last laugh on death. Dad could laugh at fate, too, as with Gerry's trickster wit and body-wisdom, the native coyote wiles to get in and out of tight spots. The old ones survived on such wit.

"Salt or sugar?" Marie riddles Nector with her snap-back quality, her mother wit, her "whip singing" resilience of a young willow by the river. This fencing and forgiving humor, Trickster's blessing as he

gambles with our lives, can be seen in "the look of mothers drinking sweetness from their children's eyes," Lipsha says of Grandma Marie, who adopted his mother June: "a bitter mother's milk. A buried root." And this totem turns out to be a dandelion blessing outside the Senior Citizens home, the sun's native week in grassed American yards, the one that blooms golden and seeds white in stypic puffballs. Its weedy, whip-singing, willowy humor blooms as an image of (Native) American resilience. Its tenacity represents bonding and survival, tolerance and stubbornness among Indians. This is a native field of play of surprise and comic inversion--the "permitted disrespect" of trickster tales, barroom jokes, kitchen slander, sibling rivalry, tall yarns, and traveling salesman stories, where near insult is enjoyed, indeed, nurtured, in order to season a home for us all.

It's a matter of love medicines--the aches, pains, passions, or losses--that accompany the drives, accomodations, failures, and sacrifices of American modern life. These involve comforts and forgivenesses...often matters of good "medicine," or luck, or simply the good-will-of-necessity where our mutual needs transcend our betrayals. Our theme is the "family" in various forms, from Lulu's wild brood of eight genetically mixed kids, to Zelda's abstemious kitchen, to June's wayward love, to Marie's home-for-strays. There is no "pure" America, but truly a pluralistic one for "took ins." There's always a woman at the center, at the source, and a man lurking somewhere on the edges of the clearing.

Finally, our pursuit of American thought--the literary presence

of Native/American history--might track the origins of our originality, the "native" in the "nature" in this country. There appears to be some equational sense of tradition and experimentation, old and new tricks. The "novel," as we have it now, American and Native American and otherwise, is something new, but over three centuries something now old as well, going back through Dickens and Defoe to Greene in Shakespeare's day, and before that orally back through Chaucer and narrative poetry, to the Old Testament, Homer, and even, tying up the global circle, to the "old man" himself, Lao Tsu, trickster contemporary of Confucius.

In brief, what do we have to say or write worth listening to, today in America? What words are memorable? What thoughts make sense? Akin to the visions and voices of poets, Faulkner, O'Connor, Welty, Welch, Momaday, Silko, and now Erdrich are American novelists making history "new," going back to the old storytellers of the tribe--Eli Kashpaw, Old Man Pillager, Grandmother Rushes Bear, or Jacob Nibènegenesábe--up to present-day chatter at family gatherings, where among other things the women bake, scrub, and cackle, as the men whittle, smoke, and joke. Some write, of both sexes. These are the settings, the places, the cottage kitchens, the foods and feuds and reconciliations of our stories, our homes in the verbal tongue and tissue we call an American language--all this, in this good land, gives us our sense of "what Moves-moves," our commonly blessed and native America.

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Comment on Kenneth Lincoln, "Indian Literature and U.S. History"

by

Peter Iverson

At my father's wake,  
The old people  
    Knew me,  
    Though I  
        Knew them not,  
And spoke to me  
In our tribe's  
Ancient tongue  
Ignoring  
The fact  
That I  
Don't speak  
The language.  
And so  
I listened  
As if I understood  
What it was all about,  
And,  
Oh,  
How it  
Stirred me  
To hear again  
That strange,  
    Softly  
        Flowing  
Native tongue  
So  
Familiar to  
My childhood ear.

--Janet Campbell Hale

Kenneth Lincoln speaks to a number of important issues and in the time reserved here for me today I will attempt to address at least some of them, as they were suggested to me in the course of reading his paper.

Oral expression and interpretation have been central to Indian life. Stories have always included teachings about the ways things came to be, about historical events, about proper conduct; they range

from the serious to the extremely funny. Traditionally, language itself has served as what cultural anthropologists have termed a working ethnic boundary. Given the complexity, the nuances of Indian languages, mastery of any of them has been reserved almost entirely to members of a particular tribal community.

Within the twentieth century, a progressively larger percentage of American Indians have come to live off of the reservation. Among other things, this alteration of residence has encouraged the decline in native language speakers, but also the evolution of English as a language that Indian peoples used themselves and could use to speak to each other. Ironically English thus could promote pan-Indianism and could be used by Indian writers to communicate their ideas, their teachings.

In an essay I wrote several years ago about Indian tribal histories, I argued that fiction often permits Indian writers to be more free to speak directly to Indian history. The problems and issues confronted even by characters in contemporary times are affected sharply by historical developments in regard to the use of land, social custom, and tradition. These individuals thus respond to current choices and problems within a context etched by history. As there are far more Indians who write poetry, short stories, plays, and novels than there are Indians who write formal academic history, historians must employ Indian fiction in their effort to understand Indian history, especially that of the more recent past.

While reservations permit to a varying degree a certain amount of insularity and separation, Indian life today nonetheless has been increasingly urbanized. A majority of Indians now live off reservations, though that does not mean their ties to the reservation are necessarily cut. Those of us who teach American history of the twentieth century, especially of the post-World War II period, speak to urbanization. How does Indian urbanization fit into larger patterns?

Just as earlier immigrants to the American West brought cultural baggage with them, so, too, do Indian immigrants to town and city. And as Arthur Margon noted in an article comparing groups new to the city, it is useful to "drop the assumption that traditional cultures can only function to hinder adaptation to a core culture and focus instead on the ways members of a minority group utilize traditional norms to assist their adjustments to new and potentially disruptive environments." And Indians in the city still may participate in reservation politics or return to a reservation to take on leadership roles. For example, the Navajo Tribal Council now provides financial assistance to urban organizations in Phoenix and elsewhere. Peter MacDonald and Peterson Zah, past and current chairmen of the Council, both gained a university education and MacDonald also worked for Hughes Aircraft in southern California before coming back to the Navajo Nation. [Editorial note: In November 1986, after a recount, MacDonald was re-elected Navajo Tribal Chairman].

As Lincoln says, there are choices to be made and problems

to be faced. How do we define responsibility to one's self and to others? What is the role of family in modern America? Indian poets write of the importance of extended family and the roles played by older people:

grandmother

if i were to see  
her shape from a mile away  
i'd know so quickly  
that it would be her.  
the purple scarf  
and the plastic  
shopping bag.  
if i felt  
hands on my head  
i'd know that those  
were her hands  
warm and damp  
with the smell  
of roots.  
if i heard  
a voice  
coming from  
a rock  
i'd know  
and her words  
would flow inside me  
like the light  
of someone  
stirring ashes  
from a sleeping fire  
at night.

--Ray A. Young Bear

Luci Tapahonso writes of her father checking "the oil and tires on the pickup and then he and my brothers would load up the big laundry tubs, securing the canvas covers with wooden blocks" before the family would go into Farmington, his reading Reader's Digest in the truck, his singing in Navajo on those final miles home after stopping at the Blue Window gas station, all the others but him sleepy and tired, his voice strong and clear "like those men on the Navajo hour." Or of her

mother's little brother, for whom she pours "more coffee and he spoons/in sugar and creme until/it looks almost like a chocolate shake/then he sees the [Hills Brothers] coffee can./oh, that's that coffee with/the man in a dress, like a church man./ah-h, that's the one that does it for me./very good coffee."

In commenting upon the "unexpected Indians" in Louise Erdrich's remarkable novel, Love Medicine, Lincoln raises for us images of people whose lives are characterized by uncertainty, by chance, by going on. These are hardly romantic Indians from a nostalgic past; they are honest and true reflections of a complicated present. I see such fiction as an opportunity for students of history to appreciate its hold upon how we act, what we say, what we believe. In that small and ever-shrinking percentage of people who now may actually be classified as rural, we see a world in some ways greatly removed from much of the people of this country. Or are the physical surroundings the primary difference and the basic human emotions essentially the same, whether the scene is Whittier Boulevard or Turtle Mountain? Both environments hold people, bring them back again and again. Still, it is easy for urban people to not appreciate something they do not know, and too few people from the city fully grasp the power of the land. If we are going to try to understand what it is that allows and forces rural people to continue on land that seemingly does not yield much, in climate that often defies belief, and amidst other people that one often could prefer never to see again, we must consider writing such as:

this road winds smooth  
into the belly of the earth

the rocks tinged blood-red,  
cliffs bare and hard like ribs,  
surround this place  
dry and strong, sure as  
children return.  
this car wakes dust  
swirling around, never ending  
i can hardly see the  
damp ditch weeds hovering over  
the water there, clear  
and cold in this hot dry land.

i still taste rain-fresh dirt  
and good firm songs this land had given,  
and returning prayers circle slow  
and even into the belly of the land.

--Luci Tapahonso

Ken Lincoln properly emphasizes the importance of place and home. "A place to love and to be irritated with" describes my feelings about Arizona rather well. When I made the decision to leave Wyoming and return to a more southern desert, I realized that an integral element in that choice was my belief that I belonged more completely to Arizona. Academics at a certain level may put profession and prestige before place or at least plea that the profession does not afford them the luxury of living where they would prefer to reside. As they grey, they may, some more privately than others, begin to wonder about the matter in a new manner. Others may have consciously or unconsciously made that decision years before based upon a myriad of factors and influences.

For our students, for a great many Americans in the past two generations, the matter of place has taken on new dimensions. Modern transportation and contemporary careers apparently provide alternatives; family ties weaken (or do they?) and looking out for number one may lead one to a variety of promised lands. It is

certainly a fruitful area for us to explore in our classes: to examine the role of race and class in determining one's place and how one defines home. If it is a mobile society, is it also a rootless one? Or does home continue to cast its spell in deep, powerful ways that ultimately cannot be ignored? It is a tension to be acknowledged and dealt with--in the life of Louise Erdrich, Ken Lincoln, and all of us.

Lincoln closes with a reference to "our commonly blessed America." Two of my favorite western historians are writers who understood that despite our many differences we share a common heritage. I am willing to bet that many of you have not read much of John Neihardt or Mari Sandoz, but let me urge you to discover or rediscover them. In their collective work, they deliberately chose to embrace the land and its peoples: trappers, cattle ranchers, farmers, community builders, military personnel, healers, immigrants, Indians and non-Indians - all.

In a world fraught with uncertainty, endangered by the prospect of nuclear annihilation, our students, even our younger ones, do look beyond themselves and beyond the cares of the moment. In that common quest for meaning and for survival, historians recognize that each age has its terrors.

We may be less sure of what kind of responsibility we bear for the world of our children and grandchildren. We might ponder the words of one young Indian poet:

i must be like a bridge  
for my people  
i may connect time; yesterday  
today and tommorrow - for my people  
who are in transition, also.  
i must be enough in tomorrow, to give warning -  
if i should.  
i must be enough in yesterday, to hold a cherished secret,  
Does it seem like we are walking as one?

--Irene Nakai

Permit me to conclude my remarks with a portion of the statement  
Roberta Hill Whiteman prepared for Songs From This Earth on Turtle's  
Back:

I have a number of other projects going--more poems, a few short stories and a novel I keep plugging away at. So much tyranny stalks through the world today--tyranny of the marketplace and of the heart. Mayans are being massacred in Guatemala, unemployment and alcoholism continue to kill us on our reservations, radiation poisoning and acid rain kill our means of life, sky and earth wounded again and again. The only strength I find comes from the myths of our people. As in the Popul Vuh I believe it is the artisan's responsibility to help the earth overcome such dreadful tyranny. It is the artisan's responsibility to sing the sky clear so that we can walk across the earth, in a place fit for flowers.

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American Bureaucratization and Tribal Governments:  
Problems of Institutionalization at the Community Level\*

by

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Tribal governments have had a rather checkered history over the last century. Between the General Allotment Act of the 1880s and the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 (IRA), traditional Indian governments were ignored and deliberately repressed. During the thirties, John Collier's crusade for Indian self government did not achieve the desired results. Tribal groups, in general, did not hasten to gain self government under the rules and regulations of the IRA. Of the two hundred and fifty two tribes that voted on acceptance of the IRA, 174 tribes accepted, but only ninety two voted to adopt a IRA constitution; and only 71 tribes went the full distance and were incorporated under IRA provisions.<sup>1</sup>

There were several reasons for the resistance to acceptance of the new IRA governments. Relatively assimilated Indians did not want tribal control over their lives and property.<sup>2</sup> All the New York Iroquois reservations rejected IRA constitutions, in part because they disliked Collier's tactics in inducing them to adopt constitutions, but also because the Western political form proposed in the IRA constitutions contained voting procedures, parliamentary rules and regulations that the Iroquois did not think were appropriate for them.<sup>3</sup> Similarly seventeen Pueblos rejected the IRA because they

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believed that a written constitution would not be sufficiently flexible and would generate increased factionalism.<sup>4</sup> Some tribes, like the Papago, adopted an IRA constitution, but without widespread understanding of the rules that governed the new political system.

Peter Blaine, a former Papago tribal chairman, remarked:

The people didn't know nothing about organizing a government. There was only the chief's organization in each village. There were no elections. What the chief said was law. The people had accepted this way of village life for who knows how long. ...I had a hard time explaining the idea of a reservation wide government and the constitution that had to be written to get the organization started.<sup>5</sup>

While not all tribes adopted an IRA constitution, some like the Crow and Navajo, adopted non-IRA constitutions or bylaws under Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) supervision, and some, like the Northern Arapahoe, are governed by a business council, which is also subject to BIA regulation.<sup>6</sup> Whatever the specific form of government established on a reservation, Western conceptions of proper political organization officially predominate. Clyde Kluckhohn and Robert Hackenberg stated that:

(T)he IRA program for constructive Indian acculturation assumes the general applicability and utility of two principles of organization: (a) self rule according to parliamentary procedures and democratic ideals; and (b) communal enterprise as the most efficient and expedient means for economic betterment.

Some of the Western conceptions of legitimate political order that are implicitly embodied in contemporary reservation governments include: voting, parliamentary procedures, delegation of power to elected and bureaucratic officials, majority rule, collective political commitments and obligations, impersonality, and formal political equality.

Whenever a tribe elected to adopt a constitution or bylaws under the supervision of the Secretary of the Interior and the Bureau of Indian Affairs, U.S. officials thereafter held Indian leaders and people in legal conformance with the rules and regulations embodied in the new constitution or bylaws. Government officials assumed that, as is customary for the formation of voluntary associations and political institutions in U.S. society, electoral confirmation of a constitutional document by interested parties would thereafter mutually bind the parties to abide by its rules. As already indicated above by the Papago example, Indian rules of political organization and participation are very different from those of American society, and acceptance of an IRA government or bylaws may not be interpreted or understood by the Indian community in the same manner as is understood in American society. In effect, tribal governments, especially IRA governments, impose Western forms of parliamentary procedure and democracy onto Indian societies whose social and cultural systems have traditionally supported less specialized political institutions. American political organization assumes separation of political and religious institutions, a separation of community social units (e.g., kinship and family) and political organization, and an impersonal, individualistic form of equality. In Indian communities, however, religious, social, and political institutions generally overlap and political and community relations are highly personal. Consequently, the institutional formations that are presupposed to uphold democratic political institutions in American society are generally not present in Native American societies.

Nonetheless, tribal political organizations continue to function and operate and are considered by the U.S. government to be the legal and official representatives of the Indian tribe. But if tribal governments do not find a favorable institutional context for operation within the Indian communities they serve, can they represent the interests of their constituents? How can tribal governments operate within the context of conflicting cultural and political expectations from BIA officials and the Indian community?

#### Some Preliminary Discussion

In order to gain a clearer understanding of the relations of tribal communities and the BIA bureaucracy with tribal governments, it is useful to distinguish between a factual order and a normative order. Both types of order help explain the continuity and persistence of a set of social arrangements, in our particular case the institutionalization and persistence of tribal governments.

Factual orders are uniform or systemic social arrangements that are determined by external coercive conditions of necessity or force. A normative order is constituted with reference to a system of norms, rules or ends. Most traditional Indian social order is normative, in other words, members comply with a set of shared values, religion and rules of proper behavior or moral order. From the point of view of BIA officials, tribal governments constitute normative orders that are organized by the norms of majority rule, one man one vote, and delegation of political power to elected officials. Those reservation Indians who accept American political culture and the legitimacy of

tribal government on the basis of Western democratic principles, also will share the view that tribal governments constitute a normative order.

Normative orders preserve an element of voluntarism or freedom, since social actors must agree through consensus on the rules of the order and can in principle change those rules or laws if they so agree. Tribal governments are, however, much more like factual orders when viewed from the position of traditional Indian reservation communities. Traditional Indian community members do not share the same rules of social and political behavior as do BIA officials or assimilated Indians. Thus the laws of political organization that constitute tribal governments are alien and external, and not part of the more traditionally oriented Indians understanding or expectation of proper and moral political and social action. To the traditional Indian community members, the tribal government is outside of the moral order, and acts as an external force that demands conformity to a set of alien laws and procedures. Since BIA officials demand that tribal governments conform to Western democratic political ideals, tribal members find that their values and expectations of political order and action cannot be directly realized within the frameworks of most contemporary tribal governments. The BIA-dominated tribal government acts as an external coercive force that constrains the possible action of the traditional Indian community. Consequently, the relation between many tribal governments and its reservation community resembles a factual order rather than a normative order with shared norms and ends between BIA officials, tribal government leaders, and the reservation Indian community.

It is precisely the disjunction of normative expectations and the variation in normative relations between the BIA supported tribal governments and Indian reservation communities that I would like to examine. The problem with factual orders is that they are inherently unstable and must be maintained by constant application of force and/or by infusions of material resources.<sup>9</sup> Tribal governments are supported by U.S. resources and upheld by American commitments to democracy. As long as American values and willingness to commit financial resources to the BIA and the tribal governments are maintained, there seems little danger that tribal governments will dissolve as political units. Nevertheless, from the point of view of many reservation communities, tribal governments are not normatively institutionalized organizations. Tribal governments can be normatively institutionalized only if reservation community members accept the presupposed laws, parliamentary procedures, collective commitments and delegation of political power that compose a representative democratic political order.<sup>10</sup> Many reservation Indian communities, however, do not readily accept Western political institutions and their members have not internalized Western political norms. In such cases, tribal governments are not normatively institutionalized by their constituent communities, and the BIA supported tribal governments act as externally imposed coercive political orders.

In effect the relations between tribal governments, U.S. bureaucracy and reservation Indian communities involve aspects of both factual and normative order. Both types of order must be accounted

for in any sensitive analysis of tribal government political relations. As will be seen below, most students of tribal governments have emphasized the coercive aspects of tribal governments, which are upheld by external American economic, political, cultural and bureaucratic forces and interests. There is no doubt much truth to this approach, but such an approach tends to underplay or ignore systematic attention of the normative responses that the various Indian communities have made toward tribal governments. How have Indian communities through their leaders and institutions perceived, reinterpreted and, in some cases, selectively adopted aspects of Western political organization? I will argue that the study of reservation normative orders will help explain the variation in the ways that Native American communities have responded to the reservation political order imposed by American society.

#### Powerless Politics

Perhaps the primary explanation given for the absence of community support, the absence of community commitment and the pervasive apathy of tribal members toward their tribal governments has focused on the bureaucratic domination of the BIA rather than on the normative order of the Indian communities. In this view, the tribal governments, especially IRA governments, are seen as indirect ways of controlling and governing reservation populations. Tribal government constitutions usually contain clauses that make tribal government legislation and decisions subject to approval by the Secretary of the Interior and the BIA. Tribal governments are not empowered to make

chapter political units. Chapter leaders are expected to be of exemplary character, possess good speaking skills, show personal charisma, have proven ability in practical matters, and not to act in an authoritative way or without the consent of the local community.<sup>25</sup> Decisions on the chapter level continue to be made by community consensus. The chapter officers do not have delegated powers.

"Although officers are elected, their authority is situational, consensus based and nondirective....Outwardly, these roles are defined in terms of the town meeting official; however, in practice they incorporate important aspects of the traditional kin-based authority system....<sup>26</sup>

Although the organization of the Navajo local chapters into voluntary associations would imply, from the Western point of view, direct individualistic participation and political commitments to the chapter units, chapter units do not command primary Navajo political allegiances. Rural Navajo political identification continues to be given to clan, domestic and genealogical kinship affiliations.<sup>27</sup> Consequently, local Navajo community norms predominate at the chapter level and it seems doubtful that local and kinship based political culture and allegiances can be the basis for the normative legitimization of the centralized Navajo Tribal Council.<sup>28</sup>

It seems more probable that the formation of national commitments and commitments to a centralized political system stem from a response to external threats to land and resources, to bureaucratic competition and domination. The nationalism of the Navajo is a pact of resistance against potentially coercive external forces. In this sense the Navajo Tribal Council constitutes a factual order, rather than a political system that is legitimated by the norms and values of the

decentralized, segmentary, kinship and local groupings which compose the Navajo societal community.

Disjuncture between a factually ordered tribal government and the traditional normative order is the rule rather than the exception for reservation community and tribal government relations. The fact that tribal governments are weakly institutionalized may not, as the powerless politics position indicates, be attributable entirely to the mode of bureaucratic and legal domination which impairs tribal government effectiveness and consequently results in the loss of community support. As the sketch of the Navajo case indicates, the weakness of community support for a tribal government may derive from the absence of a normative order that is capable and willing to support a tribal government organization. The disjuncture between the reservation community normative order and the norms and values that are required to legitimate and motivate participation in democratic tribal governments may inhibit the community from participating in and supporting the tribal government. In such cases, the tribal community will prefer political forms that are more closely congruent with their own normative expectations. Some insight into the diffident acceptance of tribal governments can be obtained by comparison of the institutional formations of American society with the organization of Native American societies, where the tribal government is not normatively supported by the reservation community.

#### The Normative Argument

As indicated above, a political organization is normatively

institutionalized if the constituent population shares common rules, role expectations, procedures and values, all of which facilitate motivation to participate in the government and to uphold and submit to its authority. Native American normative orders vary significantly from United States society, and consequently, the institutional supports for a democratic political system cannot be assumed to be present in Native American communities. Thus the imposition of Western forms of political organization on to reservation communities does not ensure their normative institutionalization, even when the tribal governments are supported by substantial economic resources and bureaucratic power. Tribal governments can be normatively institutionalized when the Indian community adopts and internalizes the parliamentary rules of political procedure and the representative democratic system of government. From the point of view of American society, the formation of a tribal government needs merely the positive referendum vote of the reservation population. But such a position abstracts from the aspects of Native American social and cultural organization which make the institutionalization of American political forms extremely difficult and often, from the Indian point of view, not desirable.

Native American societies vary from American society in terms of: leadership role expectations, relations of power and authority, the relations between the political system and the community, and relations between the political system and face to face social interaction.<sup>29</sup> American society is characterized by a functionally specialized political system. This means that the political system

has attained a degree of independence or autonomy from the other major institutions in society, and also that the political system abides by a special set of internal rules and regulations (i.e., parliamentary rules, party system, majority rule, and special judicial procedures) that do not necessarily hold within other sectors of the society. In the American political system, it is assumed that kinship and family considerations are not a major determinant of politic decision making; and that the community that supports the political system is composed of individuals who share collective rights and obligations under the government. Furthermore, the political organization is impersonal; in other words, it does not function through sustained interaction and direct consensus between political leaders and the individual members of the community who support it. United States political leaders are delegated limited powers to perform the tasks recognized to be within the sphere of government.

In Native American societies, political organization, community and individual interaction usually are fused together in a common institutional framework.<sup>30</sup> Political and kinship relations often overlap, and kinship groups and locality continue to demand primary political allegiance over sustained commitments to a centralized political organization or even to the collective tribal society. Political decisions are made by local community consensus, leaders are not delegated power but must represent the decision of the community that has been reached through direct face to face interaction and negotiation. The differences in political-community relations, in leadership roles, in political-individual relations compose a

normative order in Native American societies that inhibits the ready acceptance of American democratic ideals that are presupposed in tribal government organizations.

Now let's look more closely at the Native American community by reviewing some specific examples and starting with the patterns of political and community relations. Among the Sioux, tribal leaders and headmen assumed positions of authority based on continued assent by the community. The leader was required to consult directly with his followers and, if he made mistakes or appeared self interested, he would lose his political following and hence his status and influence. The leader's influence lasted as long as he could maintain the respect of the people for his bravery and wisdom.<sup>31</sup> The traditional norm of decision making by consensus contrasts with decision making by majority rule. Graham Taylor argues that the suspension of decision making by negotiated consensus led to increased bitterness and factionalism among the Rosebud Sioux. Groups of dissenters in the old days could withdraw if they did not agree with the decision of the majority, but in the reservation setting under the tribal government the dissenters are bound by the decisions of the majority.<sup>32</sup>

A similar form of direct community consensus formation was prevalent among the Papago. Peter Blaine states that the Papago way: required consultation with all the people in all the villages. Decisions were made only after much discussion and concurrence in the loosely structured group of village headmen who formed the League of Papago Chiefs.<sup>33</sup>

Even after the adoption of an IRA government in 1936, Papago political relations continued to conform to traditional patterns. Village

chiefs retained considerable influence over their people, and decisions by the tribal government required direct consultation and consensus formation among the people.<sup>34</sup> In more recent years, however, Papago tribal leaders have consulted less with the Papago villagers and make their decisions in the council without soliciting community consensus. Without direct consultation from the tribal council, an absence of trust and loss of respect has emerged between the villagers and the tribal leaders.<sup>35</sup> The decentralized and interactive community consensus form of decision making contrasts directly with the hierarchical, impersonal and task oriented decision making powers that are written into the constitutions and bylaws of the tribal governments.<sup>36</sup>

Perhaps an even more critical difference in normative order between the expectations of BIA officials and Native American communities is the absence of centralized or collective political commitments and allegiances. Most tribal government constitutions or bylaws assume that community members will participate as individuals and that the tribal government will command the primary political allegiances of the community members. The absence of collective commitments tends to foster factionalism, weak political solidarity, and the absence of a shared collective moral order that is capable of normatively institutionalizing and legitimating a tribal government.<sup>37</sup> As the Navajo tribal government must compete with local kinship groups for political allegiances, so the Sioux have a segmentary, band society with primary political allegiances embedded in local kinship groups, called tiyospave. William Powers argues that the IRA

political centralization on the Pine Ridge reservation imposed majority rule and ignored the tiyospaye. He states that the failure of the tribal council to recognize the traditional tiyospaye leaders is a leading cause of the political factionalism that is characteristic of the Pine Ridge reservation.<sup>38</sup> Raymond DeMallie writes:

They do not identify with the tribe as a political group, and would prefer to run their own affairs at the local level under the direction of local leaders whose support comes from community faith in their abilities.<sup>39</sup>

As at Pine Ridge, Ernest Schusky reports that the Sioux community at the Lower Brule reservation gives little sustained support to the tribal government. Candidates for political office rely on personal appeal and kinship ties to gain enough votes for election to a tribal government office. The common view within the community is that political leaders are self interested and not interested in collective goals. The tribal government is manipulated for personal and kinship favors. A personal friendship or kinship obligation from a tribal councilman may produce a favorable action from the council].<sup>40</sup>

Analogous observations of an absence of sustained community support have been made about the Hopi IRA tribal government. Graham Taylor argues that traditional government in the Hopi villages was composed of clan affiliations and differential access to secret religious societies. Each of the Hopi villages was an independent social, political and religious unit.<sup>41</sup> The villages were internally cohesive, but did not have a tribal wide political system. Village allegiances superceded tribal identification. The Hopi accepted an IRA government after much of the political autonomy of the villages

was preserved in the new constitution. Nevertheless, the Hopi did not develop tribal unity that would form the basis of community support for the tribal government. Several Hopi villages interpreted the IRA constitution as a attempt by the United States to dissolve their sacred autonomy, and to create a political organization that was favorable to the policies of the American government. According to John Collier, the Hopi IRA tribal government did not work. "What he seems to have meant is that the constitution did not generate any sense of shared tribal values and goals."<sup>42</sup> According to Taylor, a major failure of the IRA governments was their inability to generate community support.<sup>43</sup>

Similar arguments could be made for numerous other cases.<sup>44</sup> Decentralized, segmentary social-political structures predominate among Native American societies. This causes great difficulty in forming tribal wide political solidarities, which are a precondition for normatively institutionalizing a centralized political system.

Now let us turn to community expectations for leadership roles and associated conceptions of power and authority. Leadership roles among many Indian societies are noncoercive and depend on community approbation for the maintenance of status and rank. Traditional Indian leaders are not expected to exercise independent authority and decision making power. The role expectations that BIA officials have for tribal government officials is much more like leadership patterns in American society than in Indian society. Bureau officials expect tribal leaders will make independent and speedy decisions that do not

necessarily involve consultation with the Indian community. Thus tribal leaders are often caught in a situation of competing role expectations between BIA officials and the Indian community. Merwyn Garbarino describes such a situation among the Florida Seminole. Under the Seminole IRA government, BIA officials exert considerable control over the tribal government through the demand that the Seminole and their leaders conform to bureaucratic procedures and regulations. Seminole leaders are forced to mediate between the demands of BIA officials and at the same time maintain their own credibility within the Seminole community. Seminole leaders must obtain unanimous consent within the community before a decision can be implemented. An independent decision made by Seminole tribal government leaders would stir opposition, which would be expressed through community social control mechanisms of hostility and passive resistance. Although Seminole tribal officials are elected to office and under the constitution have delegated political powers, tribal leaders continue to conform to traditional consensus patterns of political decision making. Despite adoption of an IRA government, traditional expectations for political leaders and conformity to consensus decision making continue to inform Florida Seminole political action.<sup>45</sup>

Sioux leaders also experience conflicting role expectations from BIA officials and the local community. Sioux culture, like many Indian cultures, is egalitarian and no man can coercively command another to do his bidding. Sioux leaders must combine traditional values of leadership, such as generosity, noncompetitiveness, and the

ability to mediate harmoniously among their followers, with the expectations of representativeness, efficiency and effectiveness demanded by the white world.<sup>46</sup>

Loretta Fowler discusses conflicting role expectations for Northern Arapahoe leaders. As among many other tribes, the Arapahoe made decisions through compromise and development of a community consensus. Arapahoe leaders were expected to express the opinion of the group and were not initiators of action. Men maintained their positions of leadership through generosity and reputations for valor.<sup>47</sup> During the reservation period, the Arapahoe expected their leaders "to conform to the values of tribal life, to resist intimidation by whites, and to try to undermine repressive and undesirable policies or programs." Federal officials expected the leaders to reject tribal values and to be cooperative.<sup>48</sup> In 1893, in an effort to undermine traditional authority relations, federal officials introduced a business council with electoral offices. Federal officials expected that the elected members of the business council would make their own decisions and not depend on community consensus. But consensus decision making continued within the framework of the new business council.

(T)he council chiefs continued to do as they had always done; they reiterated<sup>49</sup> positions taken and decisions reached by all prominent men.

Up to the present, community consensus continues to determine the selection of leaders. A potential leader must establish his reputation within the community before he can be considered a qualified candidate for office. "From the Arapahoe point of view,

balloting tends to formalize group consensus."<sup>50</sup> Despite the presence of an electoral business council among the Arapahoe and formal delegation of authority to council members, Arapahoe leaders are expected to be spokesmen for the community consensus and not exercise the political decision making powers delegated to councilmen in accordance with Western political leadership roles.<sup>51</sup> The Araphoe, Sioux and Seminole examples illustrate the conflicting interpretations and expectations of leadership roles between the Indian community and BIA officials.

To summarize some of the preceding points, Indian reservation communities and BIA officials do not share the same normative expectations about political participation in tribal governments. Bureau officials assume that tribal governments should operate like American local governments. Leaders should be elected by majority vote, and be delegated power to act in behalf of the entire tribe. Individuals should give primary political allegiance and commitment to the tribal government over any other subtribal social or political groupings. Nevertheless, many reservation community members have not internalized the normative expectations that BIA officials regard as preconditions to participation in the democratic tribal governments. Many tribal community members are more strongly allied to kinship and local groupings than to any tribal wide organization, expect that their leaders will represent only community consensus and expect that all important decisions will be made with direct community participation and consensus. The absence of Western forms of political normative commitments among reservation Indian communities,

in conjunction with BIA presuppositions and demands that Indians conform to Western forms of political culture, creates a situation where BIA officials and Indian communities do not share a common system of norms and values for participation in tribal government.

As indicated earlier, political organizations that are not normatively institutionalized have problems with legitimacy and with the extension of community moral order to the political system, both of which result in political instability, corruption, weak collective capacity, factionalism, and materialistic-dependent attitudes toward the BIA. All these characteristics describe many, although not all, tribal governments.<sup>52</sup>

For example, tribal governments on several Sioux reservations are described as corrupt, unstable, illegitimate, and without broad community support. Traditional Sioux do not see the tribal government as their own legitimate government, but rather an external coercive force over their lives.<sup>53</sup> Tom Holm uses a primarily normative approach to explain the nonlegitimacy of the tribal government on the Pine Ridge reservation. He argues that most important for understanding the weak community support of the tribal council is the traditional community's view of the illegitimacy of the delegation of political powers to elected officials and of Western conceptions of political authority, as opposed to the traditional community's continued allegiance to traditional kinship political units, nonauthoritative leadership roles and community consensus in decision making.<sup>54</sup> Among the traditional Ogala at Pine Ridge, men who run for

office are considered self seekers who have abandoned the traditional community. These Oglala politicians lose status and rank among the traditionals.<sup>55</sup> Taylor observes that Rosebud Sioux political relations before and after the IRA can be characterized by factional parties struggling for political dominance, which result in relatively frequent attempts to impeach the tribal council chairman. This tendency toward political instability, he argues, is not necessarily the result of political irresponsibility that had emerged from conditions on the reservation, but rather a reflection and continuity of decentralized and shifting alliances to tribal political leaders that derive from traditional society. He argues that Sioux political norms and leadership patterns, rather than external bureaucratic forces, are the primary basis of Sioux political instability.<sup>56</sup>

#### Normative or Powerless Politics Arguments

According to the normative interpretation, the apathy and absence of community support for tribal governments derives not from the recognized powerlessness of the tribal council, but rather from the disjunction in values and norms between the community and the externally imposed political system. What has been presented so far have been two competing arguments for the same phenomena. How is it possible to resolve this explanatory issue? Without access to systematic historical case studies the best tactic is to resort to critical cases. If the powerless politics position is correct, then the bureaucratic forces that dominate the tribal government will produce problems of political institutionalization in every case.

There are, however, at least three counter cases--the Cherokee, the Tlingit and Northern Araphoe--which provide examples of Native American societies that have supported relatively stable tribal wide political systems. A brief comparison of these cases may indicate the conditions under which Native American societies may achieve political stability under the conditions of the post contact period.

Neither the Tlingit nor the Cherokee were especially cohesive societies in their early contact periods. The enhanced post contact solidarity of both societies emerged in the context of economic and political competition with American society. The Tlingit were organized into about fifty politically decentralized clans, which never met in council to discuss collective concerns. The Cherokee were organized by about sixty independent villages located in five autonomous regions. The Cherokee national council was composed of the headmen from each of the villages. Matters in the national council were decided by unanimous agreement among all the villages. Judging from their early structural political features, neither the Tlingit nor Cherokee showed unusual promise for supporting a centralized political system. Both, however, had institutions that helped unify their societies when they came under intense political and economic competition from American society.

Cherokee society was symbolically organized around a central village at Chota, the mother town of the nation. Each Cherokee village either directly or indirectly through other village or mother towns could trace its origin to Chota. During a trade and military

crisis in the early 1750s, the Cherokee villages threw their political allegiances to the headmen of Chota. While the Chota leadership strengthened its hand during the 1750s and 1760s, the American Revolutionary War and ensuing border conflicts of the 1780s and 1790s fragmented Cherokee political unity, which was not restored until 1810, when removal and territorial threats forced the Cherokee toward stronger internal political unity. Again the Cherokee political unity centered on the principal chief, who was not required to be the headman of Chota. Between 1810 and 1827, the Cherokee formed a government that was modeled after the U.S. constitution. The new Cherokee government was formed primarily as a means to more effectively cope with American demands for removal and land. As such, there are the principal elements of a factual rather than a normative order in the formation of the Cherokee government. Nevertheless, normative elements played a role in providing a tribal wide framework on which to build a centralized government. The social and political solidarity that supported Cherokee political institution building derived from the traditional allegiances of the Cherokee villages to the principal chief. The principal chief was incorporated as the executive of the new government, while the old national council was made electoral by districts and incorporated as the lower house of the Cherokee legislature. Community consensus remained strong in support of the principal chief, and political leaders who did not uphold community sentiments were excluded from office, and in some cases executed when unauthorized sale of land was involved. The community support given to the principal chief provided the tribal wide political commitments that were required to support the centralized

Cherokee government. Except during the chaos of the American Civil War, a relatively stable group of Cherokee传统ists and their leaders controlled the Cherokee government until at least 1889.

It cannot be said, however, that the traditional Cherokee completely adopted Western patterns of political participation, since informal community consensus and organization among the traditionalists provided the primary social support and legitimization of the Cherokee government. Nevertheless, the Cherokee government operated under majority rule and parliamentary procedures. The Cherokee community was convinced that a centralized government was necessary to preserve their lands, political sovereignty and cultural autonomy, and were willing to accept a national government that incorporated the traditional principal chieftainship and national council, while strengthening their capacity to manage political relations with the United States government.<sup>57</sup>

In contrast the Tlingit have made perhaps the most complete normative acceptance of Western political organization of any Indian tribe.<sup>58</sup> While traditional Tlingit political structure was decentralized and segmentary, the Tlingit were organized into two moieties, Eagles and Ravens, and the two moieties were ceremonially and institutionally united through potlatch reciprocities. Tlingit potlatches focus primarily on death and honoring dead clan ancestors. Funeral rites are always performed by related clans in the opposite moiety, and for their services the clans of the opposite moiety are later rewarded with a potlatch or "give away." The network of

potlatch reciprocities and obligations provided a sense of social-institutional unity among the Tlingit.

The Tlingit did not have a political center until 1912, when twelve Tlingit and one Tsimshian formed the Alaska Native Brotherhood (ANB) at Sitka, Alaska. The ANB was created with Presbyterian Christian principles, which emphasized individual commitment, Christian values, progress and political equality in American society. The early ANB leaders rejected traditional Tlingit society as a hinderance to economic progress and to gaining citizenship in American society. Traditional clan leaders supported the ANB as a means to organize political action against the conditions of declining population, loss of access to traditional fishing streams to American canning companies, economic deterioration, loss of civil rights, and loss of territory. The traditional clan leaders demanded and eventually gained recognition and preservation of Tlingit culture as part of the ANB program.

The ANB has many of the characteristics of an American voluntary association. It has written bylaws, elected officers, annual grand council meetings and monthly meetings of the local chapters. Clan allegiances were not recognized within the ANB; the ANB formed a relatively autonomous political organization that was largely, though not totally, insulated from local and kinship allegiances. The ANB formed a new level of collective organization and political solidarity in Tlingit society. The Tlingit and Haida, a nearby tribe in the panhandle of Alaska, accepted the parliamentary rules of the ANB,

majority rule, the ANB's collective organization, and its delegation of authority to elected officials. At the same time, the Tlingit community became increasingly more unified, as the potlatch obligations, owing to declining population and declining economic fortunes, led to pooling of resources among the clans. Thereafter, both moieties, or actually several cooperating clans, gave a potlatch to their related clans in the opposite moiety, but all members of both moieties were invited to contribute and participate. Consequently, the potlatch came to promote unity by bringing both moieties together and hence symbolically and institutionally unifying the entire society. Traditionally, only local and related clan segments from both moieties participated in the potlatch.

By the mid 1920s, the Tlingit had unified their community order and adopted and supported the functionally specialized political organization of the ANB. The ANB has since served the Tlingit and Haida in labor negotiations with canneries, with promotion of legislation and court cases to ensure native voting rights, in the campaign to gain U.S. citizenship in 1924, and in civil rights issues and legislation, for the right for native children to attend public schools, and represented the Tlingit and Haida in a land claim suit. The ANB is still active in promoting the economic, political and cultural interests of the southeast Alaska natives. The formation of the ANB by the Tlingit and Haida is probably the most complete example of a normatively institutionalized Western political organization that can be found among Native Americans.

From the start Arapahoe society showed more cohesion than either Cherokee or Tlingit society. Arapahoe society was organized by a ceremonially legitimated age grade system.<sup>59</sup> The Arapahoe had seven age grade categories, the seventh and highest were reserved for the priesthood, while men in the sixth level, who were in their forties and fifties, were eligible to be band political leaders. Age grades facilitated ties of solidarity between men within the same age grade, which superseded ties to local kinship groups. Furthermore, the Arapahoe age grade system was one of hierarchical ceremonial authority, which superseded and gave cultural legitimization to the political leadership of the second highest age grade. The Arapahoe priesthood and higher ranks controlled the ceremonial knowledge that was necessary for younger men to advance through the seven stages of life or age grades, which publicly marked advances in social prestige and rank.

Neither the Gros Ventre nor the Arapahoe fit the usual plains pattern of fragmented and faction ridden tribal governments. The business councils of both the Arapahoe and Gros Ventre had broad community support, and to a large extent this community support derived from the tribal level unity created by the age grade systems of each tribe.<sup>60</sup> While the Arapahoe business council was formed in 1893 and the Gros Ventre business council was formed in 1904, federal officials sought to change traditional political leadership roles and community decision making, but representational democracy was not generally accepted and traditional leadership roles and community decision making prevailed within the business councils of both tribes.

A major difference between the two tribes was that Gros Ventre elders were excluded from political life soon after the adoption of the business council, while the priestly elders of the Arapahoe continue to practice to the present, and have a primary role in ceremonially legitimating and influencing the selection of the political leaders of the business council. While the four priestly elders of the highest Arapahoe age grade do not engage directly in political affairs, the religious sphere is considered superordinate to the political leadership. Fowler argues that the religiously legitimated Arapahoe age grade hierarchy supported tribal integration and political stability. In contrast the Gros Ventre did not have a ceremonially legitimated age grade system comparable to the Northern Arapahoe, and consequently were more prone to political factionalism.

In the contemporary period the Arapahoe exhibit tribal unity and political stability. The Arapahoe business council exhibits little abuse of office and embezzlement of funds, has a stable set of political leaders, and the community has extended its moral expectations and support to the members of the business council.<sup>61</sup> The religious elders actively work to promote harmony and community unity.

The way Arapahoes view age group relations has facilitated the centralization of both secular and sacred authority, offset strains toward social schism,<sup>62</sup> and contributed to political stability.

There is a strong emphasis on harmony and consensus in both the religious and political spheres of Arapahoe society.

According to Fowler, Indian tribal governments do not necessarily

have to be unstable and unsupported by their communities. She argues that the powerless politics argument is applicable neither to the Northern Arapahoe case, nor to the Ft. Belknap Gros Ventre business council before it adopted an IRA government in the mid-thirties. The tribal unity that was created by the ceremonially legitimated age grade hierarchy was a central factor in supporting a stable political order among the Arapahoe. The members of the business council, while elected, must be certified with community approval and ceremonially legitimated by the Arapahoe priesthood. Shared Arapahoe norms and values motivate and legitimate political action within the framework of the business council.

A major denominator common to the Arapahoe, Tlingit and Cherokee examples is the formation of tribal wide collective community orientations that served as a basis for supporting a tribal wide political organization. In each case, however, the institutions on which the tribal level solidarity was formed were different--the potlatch-moiety system for the Tlingit, the ceremonial age grade system for the Arapahoe, and the village hierarchy and principal chieftainship among the Cherokee. Each of these institutions, in conjunction with threatening political and economic conditions from American society, led to greater community solidarity.

#### Discussion

The Cherokee, Araphoe, Tlingit and perhaps the Gros Ventre cases show that the powerless politics argument for the instability, apathy and absence of community support for reservation tribal governments

cannot account for every case. The counter cases illustrate that a society's normative order is critical for understanding its response to external bureaucratic constraints and political domination. In the much cited Sioux case, decentralized kinship alliances form a major obstacle to formation of a reservation wide or tribal wide community solidarity. Thus, given the segmentary Sioux social structure, external bureaucratic constraints and the imposition of IRA governments serve largely to exacerbate existing social cleavages. Since there is little community solidarity, there is little capacity for the Sioux community to support its tribal government. When the Sioux try to maintain their traditional political structure and culture within the tribal government framework, they tend to maintain the decentralized and shifting political patterns of their traditional community order, which does not promote sustained collective commitments or political continuity. Hence among the Sioux there is no collective community order that will legitimate either the tribal government according to BIA expectations or even a community legitimated informal tribal government within the framework of a constitutional government, as was the case among the Arapahoe and their business council.

Among the Navajo, again we have a traditionally decentralized society, without tribal wide political ties. In recent decades, the Navajo have become more rationally conscious, but there is no collective community order among the Navajo with which to legitimate a tribal government. In a similar way to the Cherokee case, the Navajo tribal government is seen as a means of managing potentially

disruptive political and economic relations with American society, but in the Cherokee case there was a centralized institutional framework formed around the principal chief, and although the Cherokee had clans, those clans were not part of the Cherokee political structure outside of the local village unit. Furthermore the Cherokee villages in 1817-1819 were voluntarily willing to surrender their former political autonomy to an representative government. The Cherokee village and local communities informally retained their traditional ties to the principal chief even within the framework of the representative government. There seems in the Navajo case no comparable centralized framework on which to build trust and commitment in the centralized tribal government. As already noted, even the local chapters operate through community consensus and informal traditional kinship-based leadership roles. Furthermore, primary political commitments and community solidarity reside in kinship groups and locality. Navajo nation building is a response to external political and economic relations with the United States, but in this sense the Navajo tribal government and national solidarity constitute a factual order.

Overall the powerless politics argument is correct in underscoring the importance of externally imposed political, bureaucratic and economic constraints on reservation communities. Such conditions help account for the persistence of tribal governments despite the absence of support and legitimization from the reservation community. In order to understand the possibilities of tribal government stability and the variation between the responses that

reservation communities have made to tribal governments, one needs to investigate the community's normative order, especially the community's orientation toward collective or tribal wide social and political cohesion. Many tribes have an ethos of harmony and order, like the Navajo, but often this orientation is significant primarily in local, kinship and direct interaction situations. Without sustained collective community commitments, there is little chance of formation of a stable, moral and effective tribal government.

The predominant absence of normatively institutionalized tribal governments has several practical implications. An important issue that results from the disjuncture between community and tribal government normative order is the absence of a shared moral order for political leaders and participants in the tribal governments. This situation leads to opportunism, corruption and nepotism, all of which create more cleavages and dissatisfaction in the community. Another issue is that American policy usually is not sensitive to Indian norms and values. As Graham Taylor remarked, a major failure of the IRA tribal governments was the inability to gain support from the Indian reservation communities. One of the reasons for the lack of community support was the incongruency between the democratic ideals of the IRA governments and the social and normative orders of the Indian communities. Indian policy that fails to consider the variability of Indian norms and values will suffer similar fates as the IRA governments. Another example may be the recent Presidential Report on Indian Economies. The report makes an implicit assumption that tribal governments, Indian communities and individuals will act in the

economic sphere in a similar manner as American individuals and institutions. If the analysis given here is correct, then the implementation of many of the report's recommendations will be difficult. Community norms and values have deep roots and cannot be directly manipulated for policy purposes. Effective Indian policy will have to take into account and respect Indian community values and norms.

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Endnotes

1. Lawrence Kelly, "The Indian Reorganization Act: The Dream and the Reality" in The American Indian Past and Present, ed. Roger L. Nichols (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1986), 250-51.
2. Ibid., 244.
3. Laurence Hauptman, The Iroquois and the New Deal (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1981), 9, 179.
4. Kelly, "The Indian Reorganization Act," 250.
5. Peter Blaine Sr., Papagos and Politics (Tucson: Arizona Historical Society, 1981), 81.
6. Aubrey Williams, Navajo Political Process, Smithsonian Contributions to Anthropology, vol. 9, (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1970), 19-22. Loretta Fowler, Arapahoe Politics 1851-1978: Symbols in Crises of Authority (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1982), 98.
7. Clyde Kluckhohn and Robert Hackenberg, "Social Science Principles and the Indian Reorganization Act," in Indian Affairs and the Indian Reorganization Act: The Twenty Year Record, ed. William Kelly (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1954), 32.
8. Talcott Parsons, On Institutions and Social Evolution, ed. Leon H. Mayhew (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1982), 96-101. Jeffrey C. Alexander, The Modern Reconstruction of Classical Thought: Talcott Parsons, vol. 4 of Theoretical Logic in Sociology (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), 22.
9. Parsons, On Institutions, 97.

10. Talcott Parsons gives a more formal definition of normative institutionalization: "institutionalization is an articulation or integration of the actions of a plurality of actors in a specific type of a situation in which the various actors accept jointly a set of harmonious rules regarding goals and procedures." *Ibid.*, 117-118.
11. Michael Lacey, "The United States and American Indians: Political Relations," in American Indian Policy in the Twentieth Century, ed. Vine Deloria Jr. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1985), 92-93.
12. Presidential Commission on Indian Reservation Economies, Report and Recommendations to the President of the United States (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1984), 31, 43, 52. For a description of the contemporary organization and operation of the BIA see: Theodore Taylor, The Bureau of Indian Affairs (Boulder, CO.: Westview Press, 1984) and Duane Champagne, "Organizational Change and Conflict: A Case Study of the Bureau of Indian Affairs," American Indian Culture and Research Journal 7 (3, 1983): 3-28.
13. Ernest L. Schusky, The Right to Be Indian, (San Francisco: American Indian Educational Publishers, 1970), 44-45. See also: John F. Embree, "The Indian Bureau and Self Government," Human Organization 8 (Spring, 1949), 11-14; Robert K. Thomas, "Colonialism: Classic and Internal," New University Thought 4 (4, 1966/67): 37-44; Robert K. Thomas, "Powerless Politics," New University Thought 4 (4, 1966/67): 44-53.
14. Ernest L. Schusky, The Forgotten Sioux: An Ethnohistory of the Lower Brule Reservation (Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1975), 193, 225. See also: Ernest L. Schusky, "Political and Religious Systems in Dakota Culture," in The Modern Sioux, ed. Ethel Nurje (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press), 141-42.

15. Graham D. Taylor, The New Deal and American Indian Tribalism (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1980), 49.
16. Schusky, The Right to Be Indian, 14.
17. Joseph Jorgensen, The Sun Dance Religion (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972), 10. Jeanne Guillemin, "The Politics of National Integration: A Comparison of the United States and Canadian Indian Administrations," Social Problems 25 (1978): 319-332. Joseph Jorgensen, "A Century of Political Effects on American Indian Society, 1880-1980," The Journal of Ethnic Studies 6 (1979): 3-89. George Castile, "Federal Indian Policy and the Sustained Enclave: An Anthropological Perspective," Human Organization 22 (1974): 219-227.
18. Peter Iverson, The Navajo Nation (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1981), xxiii. Mary Shepardson, "Problems of the Navajo Tribal Courts in Transition," Human Organization 24 (1965): 250-53.
19. Shepardson, "Navajo Tribal Courts," 252. See also Iverson, The Navajo Nation, 74.
20. Shepardson, "Navajo Tribal Courts," 253.
21. *Ibid.*
22. Iverson, The Navajo Nation, xxiii, 10, 74.
23. Mary Shepardson, Navajo Ways in Government: A Study in Political Process, American Anthropological Association, vol. 65, no. 3, part 2. Memoir 96 (1963), 113.
24. Williams, Navajo Political Process, 53-59.
25. Louise Lamphere, To Run After Them (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1977), 30.
26. *Ibid.*

27. "Rather the kin ideology of cooperation and authority, and kinship behavior, have affected the chapter organization and the definition of chapter officer roles." *Ibid*, 31.

28. "They'd send their delegates to meetings of the whole tribe's council: what he had to report seemed big but far away. For the Counciller's meetings at Window Rock could hardly prescribe what each small community may do for itself." Robert Bunker, Other Men's Skies (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1956), 161.

29. These comparisons between American and American Indian societies are selective and not meant to be exhaustive. They are the characteristics of what has been called external differentiation. This type of differentiation concentrates on the development of autonomy of the major institutions of society from one another. For example, in Talcott Parsons' terms, the differentiation of the political system from the economy, the societal community and the cultural and value systems. See Talcott Parsons, The Evolution of Societies (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1977), *passim*. Or in the terms of Niklas Luhman, the differentiation of the societal, organizational and interaction levels of social action. See Niklas Luhman, The Differentiation of Society (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), 70-88. The text discussion ignores internal differentiation, which focuses on the organizational complexity of a specific social system. For example, in the political system, issues of internal differentiation would focus on the relations between political parties and the social structure, and the formation of

autonomous judicial, executive, and legislative institutions. The issues of internal differentiation are certainly relevant to contemporary tribal governments.

30. Luhman, The Differentiation of Society, 77.
31. William K. Powers, Oglala Sioux (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1977), 202.
32. Taylor, The New Deal, 49-50.
33. Blaine, Papagos, 46.
34. Ibid., 86-88, 97, 126.
35. Ibid., 126-127, 131.
36. Tom Holm, "The Crisis in Tribal Government," in American Indian Policy in the Twentieth Century, ed. Vine Deloria Jr., 142, 186. For a description of community consensus among contemporary Cherokees see Albert Wahrhaftig, "Community and Caretakers," New University Thought 4 (1966/67): 54-76.
37. Murray L. Wax, Indian Americans: Unity and Diversity (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1971), 74-77.
38. Powers, Oglala Sioux, 119-120.
39. Raymond J. DeMallie, "Pine Ridge Economy: Cultural and Historical Perspectives," in American Indian Economic Development, ed. Sam Stanley (The Hague: Mouton, 1978), 276.
40. Schusky, The Forgotten Sioux, 225-226.
41. Steadman Upham, Politics and Power: An Economic and Political History of the Western Pueblo (New York: Academic Press, 1982), 14-16.
42. Taylor, The New Deal, 76.

43. Ibid., 74-76. See also Theodore A. Hass, Ten Years of Tribal Government Under I.R.A. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, 1947).

44. See Robert Lowie, "Some Aspects of Political Organization Among American Aborigines," in Comparative Political Systems, ed. Ronald Cohen and John Middleton (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1967). Morton Fried, The Notion of Tribe (Menlo Park, CA: Cummings, 1975). Robert Bee, Crosscurrents Along the Colorado (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1981). William Fenton, "Locality as a Basic Factor in the Development of Iroquois Social Structure," in Bureau of Ethnology Bulletin 149 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1951), 35-54. Duane Champagne, "American Indian Societies: Some Strategies and Conditions of Political and Cultural Survival," Occasional Papers of Cultural Survival, no. 21 (Cambridge, MA: Cultural Survival Inc., 1985).

45. Merwyn Garbarino, "Independence and Dependency Among the Seminole of Florida," in Political Organization of Native North Americans, ed. Ernest Schusky (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1980), 154-56.

46. DeMallie, "Pine Ridge Economy," 296.

47. Fowler, Arapahoe Politics, 11.

48. Ibid., 12.

49. Ibid., 102.

50. Ibid., 256.

51. Ibid., 261.

52. "Tribal Government -- A Key Issue," The Indian Historian 12 (Summer 1979): 25-27. Wax, Indian Americans, 74-75. Presidential Commission on Indian Reservation Economies, Report and Recommendations, 33, 34, 36. Frank Miller, "Problems of Succession in a Chippewa Council," in Political Anthropology, ed. M. Swartz (Chicago: Aldine, 1966), 173-85. Occupation of Wounded Knee (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1974), *passim*. Meetings of the American Indian Policy Review Commission, vol. 4 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1976), 96.
53. Lacey, "The United States and American Indians," 93-98.
54. Holm, "The Crisis in Tribal Government," 135-38.
55. DeMallie, "Pine Ridge Economy," 276.
56. Taylor, The New Deal, 49-50. Robert Bee describes a similar situation among the Quechan. He shows that the Quechan have been able to achieve only sporadic political unity in response to external threats, but with the passing of the threat, the Quechan fell back into political disunity and factionalism. The tribal council enjoys little sustained community support. While the Quechan share a common ceremonial and cultural system, there was no traditional central political organization and the several major kinship settlement groups retained considerable political autonomy. Leadership roles are kinship based and nonauthoritative; contemporary councilmen continue to gather their political support from members of related kinship groups and friends. The Quechan have not been able to solve the problem of tribal political unity, or to separate political relations from particularistic allegiances to kinship groups. Consequently,

their IRA tribal government tends to be faction ridden. See Robert L. Bee, "Tribal Leadership in the War on Poverty: A Case Study," Social Science Quarterly 5 (1969): 678-86; and Robert L. Bee, Crosscurrents Along the Colorado, 163-64. For a description of the Fox and their problems with the institutionalization of a tribal government see: Frederick O. Gearing, The Face of the Fox (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Co., 1970).

57. See Duane Champagne, "Symbolic Structure and Political Change in Cherokee Society," Journal of Cherokee Studies 7 (Fall, 1983), 87-96. I do not believe that the Creeks, who wrote a constitution in 1866, were able to achieve a similar level of community unity and support for their government as developed among the Cherokee. The decentralized and autonomous villages of the Creeks tended to inhibit community support for their centralized government. In the Choctaw case, the traditional regional autonomy of the three Choctaw districts inhibited political centralization until 1860. The Chickasaw, with their tradition of centralized chieftainship, were able to dispose of the U.S. imposed government as a fourth district within the Choctaw government and in 1855 establish a constitutional government that appears to have had the support of the Chickasaw community.

58. The discussion of the Tlingit borrows freely from Duane Champagne, "Culture, Differentiation, and Environment: Social Change in Tlingit Society," in Differentiation and Social Change, ed. Jeffrey Alexander and Paul Colomby (under review by Princeton University Press).

59. The Arapahoe material and argument is taken from: Loretta Fowler, Arapahoe Politics 1851-1978: Symbols in Crises of Authority (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1982), *passim*.
60. Loretta Fowler, "Look at my Hair, It is Gray: Age Grading, Ritual Authority and Political Change Among the Northern Arapahoe and Gros Ventre," in Plains Indian Studies: A Collection of Essays in Honor of John C. Ewers and Waldo R. Wedel, ed. Douglas Ubeker and Herman Viola (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Press, 1982), 74.
61. Fowler, Arapahoe Politics, 225-226.
62. *Ibid.*, 296.

Comment on Duane Champagne, "American Bureaucratization and Tribal Governments: Problems of Institutionalization at the Community Level."

by  
Peter Iverson

As I read this paper, I wondered how Talcott Parsons would have fared as Commissioner of Indian Affairs. It might have inspired, as it did at my alma mater where we were subjected to heavy Parsonian dosages, a new rock band called "The Pattern Variables." It is hard to know.

More seriously, I believe that the application of social science theory can be very useful in the writing of American Indian history. A recent example would be Richard White's The Roots of Dependency, which has been well received by the historical profession. In that instance, White used dependency theory to explore subsistence, environment, and social change among the Choctaws, Pawnees, and Navajos. Now in his excellent paper Professor Champagne has analyzed tribal governments, employing such distinctions as factual orders and normative orders. He argues that tribal governments are factual orders, "not normatively institutionalized organizations" in most cases. The Cherokees between 1810 and 1888, the (Northern) Arapahoes, and the Tlingits are cited as examples of societies "that have maintained and even enhanced their political cohesion in the post contact period," avoiding "the more prevalent situation of weakly institutionalized tribal governments and the resultant political instability." The Navajos, alas, are dissected as a tribe whose legal system nor tribal government "appear to be institutionalized by the norms and values of the traditional Navajo community."

Now, I do not want to indulge in an extended monologue about Navajo tribal government--or Northern Arapahoe government either, for that matter. Perhaps representatives from Indian community colleges other individuals may choose to become involved in the discussion period. Given the limited time afforded me I should prefer to consider how Professor Champagne's analysis may be applied in the classroom.

Surely one of the pressing matters raised here is the representative nature of any government. The distinguished Wyoming historian T. A. Larson suggested some time ago that the residents of his state tended to view the United States as a foreign country. Even in a time characterized by endless commercials featuring the flag, Ronald Reagan has not transferred much of his personal popularity to the federal government. Most Westerners would like to place "the feds" on the endangered species list. People living on the Pacific Ocean feel removed from a government perched on the Potomac. Our tribal council, the United States Congress, never gets high marks from its constituents in the outback.

At the state level the picture changes slightly, but there generally is little public confidence in this legislative body. Legislators cheerfully represent their voters' interests, as they perceive them, often with little regard for the wellbeing of the state. Section is pitted against section, one city contends with another. Dare I say it? There is factionalism to be observed here. Traditional people, if you will, who live in the more isolated regions

of the provinces cannot often be enchanted by what they observe taking place in the halls of Sacramento, Phoenix, or Santa Fe.

Clearly there are limits to the comparison I am making here. Nonetheless, there is an extensive body of literature in political science devoted to such matters. Journals such as Legislative Studies Quarterly regularly analyze the responsiveness of legislature to popular demands. When we are critical of tribal councils, in sum, it seems useful to place our criticism within the context suggested here.

We must also ask what the alternatives are. Given the demands of today's world, can tribal governments be other than what they are? Deloria and Lytle say in American Indians, American Justice "the variety of governmental institutions and processes are many, running the length of the administrative spectrum." Yet whether they fall into the category of representative, representative/traditional combination, general council, theocracy, or some other form, tribal governments "have become legislative in their outlook and bureaucratic in their operation." But, again, what choice is there?

If tribal councils are not legislative and bureaucratic we may be assured that other legislatures and other bureaucracies will enter the picture. Tim Giago once wrote a column describing the inauguration of the tribal government of the Jicarillas and the speech given upon that occasion by Wendell Chino. "Newspapers across this country are trying to accuse the tribal governments of incompetence and corruption. Look at the examples we have to emulate: the federal government is not

perfect, the state government is not perfect, because after all they had Watergate, Koreagate, Abscam, and then Billygate. Everybody makes mistakes, so give the tribal governments the opportunity to make their mistakes, also, this is the way we learn. So goes the leader, so goes the government, so goes the tribe, and as I said, none of us is perfect. No--tribal government is not perfect, BUT it is OUR government. The outside government will not solve your problems; the Albuquerque Journal will not solve your problems, nor will the Sante Fe New Mexican solve your problems. Your tribal government must solve your problems."

Many of those problems, of course, are not unrelated to problems being confronted by other governments of the local, state, or national level. Certain issues bring these different governmental bodies into contact and often conflict with each other. In the remainder of my time, I want to use several examples to illustrate how these agencies must address these matters. The examples speak to the inescapable fact that Indian communities lie within counties, states, and within the United States.

Indian water rights are a source of continuing controversy. While the so-called Winters Doctrine supposedly assures Indians of a certain degree of access to water, Indians have had to fight quite literally for every last drop they have received. The federal government may prove to be an uncertain advocate for Indian water rights because of often competing interests within its ranks. States are highly unsympathetic to Indian claims. Given the enormous expense

involved in litigation, some western states are attempting to negotiate individually with different tribes. Depending on where they are on a river system, their past experiences in dealing with the state, and other factors, tribes may be more or less willing to deal with the states.

While new large scale western water projects have decreased perhaps in number in recent years, there are continuing implications for Indian economic development from their existence. Big projects usually provide little help to Indian communities and sometimes they threaten, indeed, their very survival. The proposed Orme Dam, for example, in southern Arizona, would have flooded Fort McDowell reservation near Phoenix. Only after sustained protest from the Yavapais and their allies did the proposal meet with defeat. Earlier episodes have included less happy endings, as Michael Lawson has chronicled, for example, in his book on the Missouri River Sioux and the Pick-Sloan Plan.

Another interesting example would be that of taxation. Should the energy companies that do business on tribal lands be subjected to taxes levied by the tribes themselves? Not surprisingly, the companies and the tribes have somewhat different perspectives on the matter. What kind of federal taxation may be imposed upon incomes obtained from Indian lands? If Indian residents of reservations should not have to pay state income taxes on earnings gained from reservation employment, then what rights should Indians enjoy in the workings, let's say, of county government? Just the other day in the

Arizona Republic. I read of a non-Indian non-reservation resident complaining about representation with taxation.

Indian rights in other arenas also provoke controversy. What about Indian fishing and hunting rights off reservation land and water? Should Indians be treated differently than other Americans? And should they be free to carry out their own fish and game codes or not establish such codes on their reservations if such action or inaction appear environmentally destructive?

In these and other matters, we must ultimately deal with the status of American Indians in the life of the United States. In so doing, we can raise central questions about jurisdiction, about cultural pluralism, about diversity, about separation, about uniqueness--about ourselves. If we believe that we are a richer and better country because of the diversity of our peoples then our teaching must reflect that belief. If we believe that the Indian experience is part of our national experience, then our teaching must demonstrate it. In the process, we can show, once again, that Indians are a part not only of our past, but of our present, and our future, too.

For Further Reading

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714-55-07

The Impact of Indian History on U.S. History and Culture:

A Final Look and Glance at the Bearing of Bering  
Straits on Native American History

by

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I have enjoyed the privilege of participating in all three Newberry Library Conferences on the Impact of Indian History on the History and Culture of the United States.<sup>1</sup> At the Chicago Conference in 1984, I occupied a first-class, front-row seat and delivered a paper entitled "Night Thoughts on Native American Social History," which succeeded in producing an unanticipated, yet doubtless over-determined soporific effect on the audience. That paper has been quietly put to bed in the McNickle Center's Occasional Papers in Curriculum Series (1985: 67-89) where it still slumbers. Some of the "thoughts" in that paper are re-awakened in this one, and the two papers might usefully be read together. In 1985 at the Washington Conference, I was promoted--or demoted, as the case may be--to the status of bus driver and led one session that passed without undue incident or serious accident. This year, as you can see, I have been placed in the back of the bus, and I have been assigned the impossible task of somehow providing a tail-light vision of all that has gone before. I will offer some highly condensed, retrospective comments, but since I am a restless soul, in the latter portion of this paper I intend to hop another bus that may, or may not, reach its dubious destination about ten years hence.

I cannot comment on all the stimulating papers and responses presented at this conference, let alone the two that preceded it, except tangentially. However, I want to compliment all the authors and discussants for their excellent, and often stimulating, efforts. In considering all three conferences, I can discern three general themes: (1) the documentation of the fact that American Indians have had an important impact on the course of American history and have contributed distinctive strands to the fabric and texture of American culture; (2) a consideration of the meanings of Native American history and problems of method and perspective in the presentation of that history; and (3) a perception that Native American history and culture have been neglected and devalued fields of scholarship and a search for possible reasons for this ignorance, if not resistance. I shall discuss these themes in sequence.

First and foremost, I believe these conferences have succeeded in clearly establishing that American Indians, indeed, have been and will continue to be a significant factor in the unfolding tragic, and sometimes comic, drama that we recognize as American history. As too frequently presented, American history conventionally commences with the arrival of Europeans to the shores of what they soon assuredly apperceived as a New World. This beginning is sometimes projected backward slightly to examine the social conditions and intellectual currents motivating European explorations. As Leslie Fiedler (1968) has suggested, and as I have elsewhere elaborated (1985), the New World or America, as she came to be called, represented the completion of a cosmological scheme, as well as the fulfillment of a millenial dream.

The tripartite continental oikumene of Europe, Africa, and Asia now had a fourth dimension, a terrestrial west, where a morally and historically tired Old World might be regenerated and begin anew. Rarely, however, is sustained attention devoted to the so-called "pre-history" of the Americas; here I share Peter Iverson's discomfort with the term prehistory. Little is noted by historians about the cumulative record of successful adaptations by indigenous populations to their environments before the arrival of Europeans. Even less consideration is given to native traditions of history, to their own culturally-constituted conceptions of their past. Until recently the European image of the American continent remained steadfastly feminine, chaste, and virginal (c.f. Hugh Honour, 1975, in passim, and Bernadette Bucker, 1981); obviously awaiting viral male suitors from across the ocean who could miraculously engender America's procreative potential.

During these retrospectively imagined first encounters, Indians are usually portrayed by Europeans as helpful hosts and hostesses who graciously bequeath to these strangers in their midst unstinting hospitality, long grocery lists of 'gifts,' and interesting itineraries for travel to the interior. Nevertheless, despite hopeful beginnings, relations soon sour and bitter struggles ensure that leave a lingering aftertaste. Western civilization, as divinely forordained and manifestly destined, prevails, and the red man reticently retreats into the hidden hinterlands of history. At least, this is how the scenario is usually scripted.

If recent research has revealed anything, it shows that the Indians did not politely lay down their cards and retire quietly from the game. They continued to play an active, and not simply reactive, role in the continuing historical contest. Using Kenneth Morrison's apt metaphor, they continued to write and manipulate their own story lines. Gary Nash has singled out the Oneidas as particular losers in the so-called 'American Revolution' despite their declared neutrality and slight tilt toward the colonists. In July of 1986, the Oneidas organized a successful conference at their lavish Rodeway Inn located on their bingo-revitalized reservation outside of Green Bay, Wisconsin. One 'story' that was repeatedly told at the conference concerned a crucial shipment of corn to Washington's starving troops at Valley Forge. Oneida renderings of this story make this 'care package' the turning point of the Revolution, and they use the 'story' to help fuel their continuing efforts to achieve restoration of their former homeland in New York State. With an impressive cadre of native lawyers, the Oneidas stand a fair chance of repatriating a valuable swath of land, 30 to 60 miles wide between Binghamton and the St. Lawrence Seaway. Thus, contra Nash, the Oneidas are far from 'losers,' they may prove not only bingo winners but may hit a gigantic legal jackpot in the near future.

Bingo-driven modernity aside, it must be emphasized that distinctive Indian cultures persist to the present and display great vitality, resilience, and capacity for renewal: Spirit Dancing among the Coast Salish has been revived; the Kwakiutls once again openly potlatch; Alaskan Inuits vigorously pursue their Seal Feasts; Pueblo

peoples maintain their measured ceremonial performances, with or without the orange-haired Jesse Jackson clowns mentioned by Alfonso Ortiz; the Navajos continue to practice their complex curing rituals; Omaha religion has been rescued from premature death; Midwinter Rites are still observed in the Longhouses of the Iroquois; and, as I can personally attest, the sacred fire still smolders in the summer square grounds of the Muskogees. Such viability would surprise those late eighteenth-century White social prophets who predicted that Indians, qua Indians, would soon pass from history. Such spiritual surgence and resurgence would also shock the late nineteenth-century, do-gooder reformers whose pro-assimilative policies were premised on the imminent disappearance of Indian religions and cultures.

A second recurrent theme in the Impact Conference involves a serious reconsideration of what is meant by Indian history and whether such a history is sufficiently informed by an Indian perspective. If history is restricted to written documents, then, in the strict sense, American Indians until recently must be classed as ahistoric peoples; Indian history, so conceived, can only be considered as a appendage of Euro-American history and be subjected to the inherent biases present within the White written record. In short, Indian history is oxymoronic--which is not an epithet of sensible nonsense derisively cast by a Cambridge man.

However, if the category of documentary evidence is expanded to include oral testimony and oral literature (perhaps another oxymoron!), art and artifacts, and other unconventional sources of

historical inference, as has been suggested by Alfonso Ortiz and others, then we must conclude that Indians do, indeed, possess rich and eventful histories. But when we consider Indian history as involved with more than simple translation, more than the forced fitting of facts into our own familiar frameworks, then serious problems arise in attempting to achieve an authentic Indian perspective. Events, the minimal units of historical analysis, must be newly defined. An event, according to Euro-American perception, may be a non-event from an Indian viewpoint, and vice versa. Each of our conferences have featured lively sessions on the American Revolution and the Indian. Yet it remains an open question whether the Revolution was a meaningful event, or demarcated period, in the minds of most Indians east of the Mississippi. Most of the Indians had been engaged in chronic warfare since the mid-eighteenth century, as Ken Morrison has pointed out. They did not automatically cease hostilities when Cornwallis surrendered at Yorktown. From an Indian perspective the Revolutionary period may merely have marked a substitution of George the First for George the Third, and a different "chain" to pull. We can ask how the Stamp Act directly impacted on Indians. One wonders how the Indians responded to the phenotypic event that supposedly triggered the Revolution--that bizarre burlesque by Boston Backbay men, bedecked in Mohawk masquerade, throwing valuable East Indian tea in the harbor. Was this supposed event seen as some kind of White potlatch? A sacrifice to underwater spirits? Very bizarre....

Another problem in understanding indigenous Indian history, or

what I like to term ethno-ethnohistory (Fogelson 1972), is an insufficient appreciation of the nature of native systems of time reckoning. Time is not necessarily seen as linear, progressive, irreversible, nor divided into equal intervals, nor conceived as a disposable commodity. So-called mythic time often merges with experimental time in dreams, vision quests, and shamanic journeys to create an eternal time-out-of-time. Not unlike the people of the Old Testament, many American Indians regard prophecy as history and history as prophecy. This prophetic tradition is amply demonstrated in many of the excerpts compiled by Peter Nabokov in his valuable anthology, Native American Testimony (1978). Prophecy isn't always expressed through the temporary inspiration of religious virtuosi but is more commonly grounded in complex systems of divination whose internal logic often eludes the attention of historians or anthropologists. In more general senses, time tends to be calibrated in terms of seasonal shifts in subsistence activities, by culturally constituted gradations in individual life and death cycles, and by the repetitive careers of domestic groups. Such considerations invite a profound rethinking about how Indian history is to be chronicled.

Another analytic component important in comprehending Indian conceptions of history involves narrative structure or story line. As Kenneth Lincoln eloquently demonstrated, such things as phrasing, tone, and a host of other stylistic features are significant variables in narration. We not only need to collect oral literature, but we also need to explicate the native standards of oral literary criticism. How things are said is often as important as what is said.

Let me illustrate with a Cherokee example. In their sacred discourse, Cherokee metaphysicians insist that words serve to focus thought and frame psychic energy. Thus a sacred formula, or i.ga.wé.sdi ('thing said'), can be recited along a sonic continuum reflecting differential degrees of power. One can think a formula, can mutter it sotto voce, can say it loud and clear, or can sing it, depending on context and intent. (Herndon, 1971).

Another important variable in understanding ethno-ethnohistory involves recognition of different genres of oral literature, their system of classification, and their appropriate usage. A long time ago, Paul Radin pointed out that the Winnebago recognized two types of narrative: Waikai and Worak. According to Radin Waikai tales "deal with a past irretrievably gone and belonging to the realm of things no longer available to men and spirit." Worak tales consider "those things dealing with the present workaday world" (Redin, 1948: 11-13) Ray DeMallie (personal communication) has suggested that the term Waikai may also mean 'snake' in Winnebago, as it does in other Sioux languages, which would make good cultural sense, since these stories are only told in winter, when the snakes are safely asleep in their dens.

The Heiltsuk, or Bella Bella, of the Northwest Coast distinguish what they call First generation stories, having to do with the origins of things, which are owned by particular lineages and can only be told by specifically entitled individuals, as contrasted to Free tales, which are common property and can be told by anyone.<sup>2</sup> Additional

examples of named genres of oral literature, some of which encompass native conceptions of history, could be adduced for many other North American groups.

The Cherokees do not have terms for distinct types of oral literature. However, in analyzing published collections of Cherokee myths, plus a large sample of taped narratives obtained in the field, I discovered non-random differences in formulaic first lines. What I would gloss as a sacred, or at least once sacred, myth would begin, 'Long ago, when the animals could talk to each other and could talk to humans....' This introduction had reference to an undifferentiated primordial time when the world was new. A second type of narrative started, 'Way back when I was a little boy, sittin' in the chimney corner, listening to the old folks talkin', this is what they'd say....' Such a statement would signal what I would classify as a folk tale, a secular story told for amusement or moral instruction without special restrictions. Finally, what the Cherokees would regard as a direct historical narrative might begin, 'Back before the Drive-away,<sup>3</sup> when the Indian was awearing diapers...', suggesting less the childhood of the race and more specifically the period when Cherokee warriors still wore breechcloths. With Cherokee oral literature, and apparently that of most other Native American groups, there was a fair degree of categorical fluidity. Sacred myths could become desacralized, historical events could become mythologized, and so forth.

Before concluding this section, I want to illustrate several of the processes that I've been trying to describe by considering a specific text. This is an example of what Jarold Ramsey labels "retrospective prophecy" (1983: 133-54), or what Ken Morrison might regard as a story about a story, or a meta-narrative. This text was collected from a Spokane elder named Cornelius in 1841 by members of the Wilkes Expedition and concerns recollections of an early eruption of Mt. Saint Helena.

Cornelius, when about ten years of age [circa 1790], was sleeping in a lodge with a great many people, and was suddenly awakened by his mother, who called out to him that the world was falling to pieces. He then heard a great noise of thunder overhead, and all the people crying out in great terror. Something was falling very thick, which they first took for snow, but on going out they found it to be dirt: it proved to be ashes, which fell to the depth of six inches, and increased their fears, by causing them to suppose that the end of the world was actually at hand. The medicine-man arose and told them to stop their fear and crying, for the world was not about to fall to pieces. "Soon," said he, "there will come from the rising sun a different kind of men from any you have yet seen, who will bring with them a book, and will teach you everything, and after that the world will fall to pieces. (quoted in Ramsey 1983: 153).

Indeed, literacy has its dangers, as this retroactive prophecy of the retroactive prophecy of the Gospels makes abundantly clear!

I turn now to a third general theme that seems to have haunted our conferences. This is the general feeling that the study of Indian history and culture is a neglected and devalued field of scholarship and that only incomplete, distorted, and greatly foreshortened accounts of the native inhabitants of this continent are disseminated to the general public through our educational institutions and other media. To understand why so much of our knowledge of Indians remains

outside our consciousness or is only summoned up through simplistic stereotypes, we must confront certain historical peculiarities in the mindset of Western man. Parenthetically, I find it interesting that no one in the conferences has considered Western history as a cultural construct or has attempted to review the history of history, including the development of our own historical narrative genres. In the tenth century Western historical narratives comprised gests, vitae, and annals, categories that both contrast with and prefigure contemporary Western conceptions of history, as well as categories that might usefully be compared with genres of traditional narratives in Native North America.

In trying to account for the neglect of Indian history, many explanations can be advanced. For some, the situation may be a simple reflex of Western racism and ethnocentrism. For others, it may represent a psychodynamic reaction-formation or strong-willed denial generated by deeply rooted, collective guilt. For still others, the neglect may be interpreted as a calculated conspiratorial silence following in the wake of invasion, capitalist exploitation, and internal colonialism. None of these arguments are completely devoid of salience. However, I hope to show that the neglected study of Indian history and culture may ultimately derive from certain fundamental assumptions and preconceptions that Western man carried with him from the Old World to the New.

As more and more of continental North America became known to Europeans, and as the ethnographic map began to fill in, two major

groups of Native Americans became prominent, the "Uninhis" and the "Hadnos." "Uninhi" has reference to the large number of blank areas that the Whites assumed to be uninhabited by native peoples and therefore free for settlement. Since little account was taken of seasonal migration, limited resource usage, hunting territories,<sup>4</sup> political buffer zones, sacred sites, and the initial effects of introduced diseases, the impression was created that the continent was underpopulated, as well as underdeveloped. The "Hadnos," while spatially localized, were recognized by the early White observers for their negative attributes: they had no religion; they had no morals; they had no laws; and they had no history. In brief, from the Western vantage point, New World peoples were culturally impoverished.

In addition to early images of sparse populations, underdevelopment, and cultural impoverishment, Europeans also held to the prevalent idea that the natives of the New World must have derived from some known Old World population. It was further assumed that the natives could not have resided long in America. After Columbus's initial misperception of the native peoples as East Indians, succeeding generations nominated such candidates as Carthagenians, Ophirites, Scythians, Scandinavians, Moors, Welshmen, and Israelites, among others, as possible ancestors of the American aborigines. By the late eighteenth century, the Tartars, really a gloss term for generalized Central Asians, gradually emerged as the consensual choice for the ancestral stock of the original Americans. Tartar ascendancy was based less on positive scientific evidence than on the progressive default of other candidates on physical or cultural grounds. Seldom

was serious consideration given to the possibility of an autochthonous development of human culture in the New World. While they may have arrived first in the New World, the American Indians were regarded as immigrants like everyone else, at least according to European belief.

Having more or less decided who the ancestors of the American Indians were and approximately, if not exactly, where they came from, Eurocentric scholars faced a simpler problem in deducing their emigration route to the New World. If the ancestors of the Indians originated from somewhere in the Asian interior, then they must have travelled through that area where Asia and the New World are most proximal--the Bering Straits region. It is interesting to note that as early as the mid-sixteenth century, two hundred years before the discoveries of Vitus Bering, a land-bridge connecting northeastern Asia with northwestern America, the legendary Straits of Anian, was already anticipated by the Spanish chroniclers.

The entry of proto-Americans into the New World via the Bering Straits survives today as unquestioned, conventional wisdom. Although sometimes qualified as the Bering Straits hypothesis or theory, few contemporary scientific scholars doubt its essential truth, and scientific authority has trickled down to etch in sharp relief general public opinion. The only groups to challenge consistently the Bering Straits hypothesis are the American Indians, the descendants of the supposed intercontinental travellers.

In the remainder of this paper, I will review some aspects of the Bering Straits hypothesis. I hope to explore the strong hold it exerts on the Western mindset and the equally strong resistance it arouses among Native Americans. This resistance can be traced at least through the late eighteenth-century statements to the impassioned rhetoric of Vine Deloria and to the articulate comments that Inez Hernandez offered at this conference.

I will foreshadow my discussion of this controversial topic with a brief ethnhistorical vignette. In the winter of 1797-98, the famous Miami Chief, Little Turtle, ventured to the then United States capital of Philadelphia to complain about unforeseen abuses following in the wake of the Treaty of Greenville, especially the hardships caused by the loss of hunting territories. Little Turtle had been a successful war chief during the battles of the Midwest, and now he was a spokesman for peace with high hopes to transform the Miamis and their allies into "civilized tribes" following the model taking shape among the Cherokees in the Southeast. Little Turtle was accompanied to Philadelphia by four other Miamis plus his adopted white son-in-law and interpreter William Wells. The intrepid Wells would later become a martyr during the Fort Dearborn massacre, and a grateful Chicago citizenry would honor his heroism by naming a street in his memory--Wells Street, which incidently runs a north-south axis, two blocks west of the Newberry Library.

Little Turtle and his entourage received the usual ceremonious reception and kind of bureaucratic run-around described so well in

Duane Champagne's paper. He received medical treatment for his chronic gout, had his portrait painted by Gilbert Stuart, and was presented with a brace of mounted pistols by the Polish patriot, Thaddeus Kosciusko (Carter 1987: 4-5). However, despite the social success, his embassy failed in its primary mission; the plight of his tribesmen was not relieved.

In addition to the presence of Little Turtle, Kosciusko, and the afterglow of a Presidential inauguration, the winter social scene in Philadelphia was also enlivened by the visit of five Tartars from Asia. In January and February of 1798, Little Turtle was interviewed some ten times, with Wells as interpreter, by an aristocratic French man of letters, Constantine Francois de Chasseboef, later to be known as Count Volney. The excerpt I cite comes from an appendix in Volney's Complete Works, published in Paris in 1837. On one occasion, the future Count spread a map before the interested Little Turtle and was surprised when the unlettered sauvage recognized the Wabash River, the Mississippi, Lake Michigan, and Lake Superior. When Volney pointed out the Bering Sea area and suggested the possibility of Tartars crossing over into the New World, Little Turtle inquired,

Isn't it possible that the Tartars, who resemble us so closely came from America? Is there evidence to the contrary? Why shouldn't we have been born here?

Little Turtle's querulous reply seems motivated by the immediate political situation that brought him to Philadelphia; namely, native title to land. Yet the questions he poses about the possibility of reverse migration from America to Asia across Bering Straits are provocative ones.

It has long been maintained by paleontologists that eohippus (the ancestral form of the horse) and several species of camelids evolved in the New World, migrated to the Old World via Bering Straits, and subsequently became extinct in the New World until some of their descendants were re-introduced by European agency.<sup>6</sup> For some reason, it seems as if reverse animal migration is more acceptable than two-way human traffic across Bering Straits. There is one notable exception: a small band of Siberian Eskimo, the Yuit, have migrated west in recent time and show close cultural relations to their Alaskan relatives.

My focus on the Bering Straits problem has been strongly influenced by my recent reading of an unpublished translation of a book by a distinguished senior German ethnologist and historian of religion, Professor Werner Müller.<sup>7</sup> Only a small portion of Professor Müller's total corpus has been translated and circulated among English-reading scholars, but he has published well-received monographs on Die Religionen der Waldlandindianer Nordamerikas (1978) and Glauben und Denken der Sioux (1970), and a recent anthology of some of his important essays, Neue Sonne-Neues Licht (1981) has appeared. In the present work, Müller lets his academic guard down and draws upon a life-time of accumulated knowledge to offer a radical rethinking of American culture history. Not only is he impressive in his control of the data of North American archeology and comparative ethnology, but Müller is also knowledgable about European prehistory, the cultures of classical antiquity, and the early post-Christian folk

culture of Western Europe. The latter area of expertise, in particular, is normally inaccessible to most Americanist scholars.

Müller's thesis is quite intricate, but, stripped down to its essentials, he argues that extreme northeastern Siberia and the American Arctic and Sub-arctic historically constitute a unified culture area. This connection is not too far-fetched. A careful re-reading of the ethnographic data collected on both sides of the Bering Straits under the auspices of the Jessup North Pacific Expedition, directed by Franz Boas, clearly points to close cultural relationships. In fact, the major ethnographer of the area, Waldemar Jochelson, classes such prominent Siberian groups as the Chukchee, Koryak, Kamchadal, Yukaghirs, Chuvantzy, and Gilyak as "Americanoids" (1928: 43-64). Müller goes on to discern a whole series of cultural similarities between this Arctic/North Pacific complex and the prehistoric and early historic cultures of northwestern Europe. Many of the traits taken singly would seem fortuitous, but in their aggregate the similarities are striking. Included here are such items of material culture as ponchos, moccasins, bearpaw-shaped snowshoes, skin boats and birch bark canoes, domed houses and conical tents, ulu-shaped knives and barbed slate harpoons. Similarities between northwestern Europe and the Arctic/North Pacific areas also encompass such specific aspects of social and mental cultural as scapulamantic divination, shamanism, bear ceremonialism, steam baths, cup-and-ball games, burial mounds, the Earth-Diver myth, and hour-glass figures and double-curve artistic motifs.

Perhaps the most interesting similarity is the presence in both areas of the horizon calendar, with several associated subsidiary features. Müller argues that the horizon calendar originated in the American polar regions where, at latitude 66° 30' north, during the summer solstice, the sun hovers in a due north direction; during the dark winter solstice the sun briefly flashes in a due south direction. From its polar origin, the horizon calendar and associated time reckoning techniques supposedly spread south to much of Native North America. Müller also uncovers compelling evidence for the early presence of the horizon calendar in northwestern Europe.

These parallels between northern North America and northwestern Europe would be more credible if we could assume a continuous interactive belt of boreal cultures across northern Asia into northern Europe. However, as Müller emphasizes, a pronounced Siberian gap, or wedge, makes such a distribution discontinuous. Müller contends that the probable connection between the New World and the Old lies across the north Atlantic. The idea of possible trans-Atlantic migration is an old one in anthropology and still has a few adherents today. Nevertheless, the overwhelming majority of archeologists and ethnologists, including myself, remain skeptical about diffusions of peoples or ideas across the north Atlantic.

A more plausible part of Müller's thesis holds that the complex adaptations of Inuit and Sub-arctic cultures developed in situ and were not carried pre-formed at a late date by small bands of disoriented Central Asians. Modern archeology in Alaska seems to

confirm an orderly, indigenous cultural development with considerable time depth. Formerly popular ideas suggesting that Inuits and Athabascan-speakers were latecomers to the New World now seem less likely in light of present evidence. Furthermore, another prevalent hypothesis--that Athabascan-and Algonkian-speaking sub-arctic hunters had moved north following the glacier retreats to become marginal survivals of earlier cultures--also seems dubious, since such items as horizon calendars, conical tents, and many other northern diagnostic traits appear to have diffused from north to south rather than vice versa.

Crucial for Müller's general thesis is the assumption of considerable antiquity for Homo sapiens in the New World. For reasons that have never been completely clear to me, Americanist scholars have historically resisted the idea of early man in the New World. Before the chance discovery of Folsom points in 1927, most archeologists and physical anthropologists only grudgingly would grant a few thousand years of human existence in North and South America. Epitomizing their conservative view was the influential Ales Hrdlicka of the Smithsonian Institution, who stood like Horatio at the Bering land bridge and personally slew every bit of fossil skeletal material offered as evidence of early man.<sup>8</sup>

Part of the problem of accepting early ages for American skeletal remains concerned the concept of morphological dating. This concept held that early fossil material had to manifest primitive, paleo-anthropic characteristics, features which were mostly lacking in

New World finds. Once the antiquity of Homo sapiens is extended to the 50,000+ year range, so-called primitive features no longer become essential criteria in dating.

At present the most conservative, secure dating of early man in America extends back about 11,500 years. Moderate archeologists, such as Jesse Jennings (1983: 27) are willing to consider 30,000 years, while the more daring Richard McNeish (1976), who has considered Middle and South American, as well as North American, remains, has arrived at a flexible estimate of 70,000 years, plus or minus 30,000 years.

Southern California has made many claims to being ancient Indian country.<sup>9</sup> Louis Leaky saw artifacts in the geofacts at Callico Hills and "guesstimated" 125,000 years of human habitation. In the 1940s George Carter produced startlingly early dates for supposed fire hearths in San Diego. Jeffrey Bada of the University of California, San Diego, utilized calcium racemization dating techniques on a series of coastal California crania; the results yielded consistent dates clustering in the 40 to 50,000 year range. I understand he has since repudiated his findings. The early dates and evidence at Santa Rosa Island are suspicious, but have not, to my knowledge, been invalidated.

More compelling than the seemingly inflated dates for early man in Southern California are newly reported sites in South America. According to recent newspaper releases, a site named Pedra Furado in

northern Brazil has yielded dates of 32,000 years before present, while another site, Monte Verde in Chile, has been preliminarily dated at 33,000 years ago. If these South American findings hold up, ancient man in North America should produce still earlier dates. Despite these controversial claims, and uncited others, plus retractions, the antiquity of Homo sapiens in the New World has been steadily pushed back in time since the heyday of Hrdlecka.

The increased possibility of Homo sapiens existing in the New World as far back as 40 or 50,000 years ago has great significance for Müller's thesis. At about this period, there is a discernable break in European prehistoric traditions with the sudden appearance of the radically different blade cultures of the Upper Paleolithic, the physical appearance of Homo sapiens, and the corresponding decline, if not disappearance, of Neanderthaloid populations. It has long been noted that the blade cultures of the Solutrian in Europe vaguely resemble certain early paleo-Indian lithic manifestations in the New World. The similarities of the reindeer hunters of the Magdalinian period with those of historic Siberian and Eskimo populations are frequently noted. Could it be that the transformations in Upper Paleolithic and subsequent Mesolithic cultures in northwestern Europe were stimulated by impulses originating in northern North America? If such a seemingly radical possibility be entertained, then, paradoxically, the New World becomes the Old World, or in good Pogoistic logic "them is us and us is them." Columbus and his crew may have glimpsed their own cultural, if not distant biological, ancestors when they first caught sight of New World natives. John

Locke's oft quoted remark, "in the beginning all the world was America," takes on renewed significance. The mind boogies!

Some tentative conclusions from this far-ranging, highly speculative discussion can be summarized as follows:

1. The boreal area of northern North America was not a marginal wasteland or refuge zone, but a dynamic, creative cultural crucible that may have exerted a formative influence on not only New World culture history, but may have had repercussions on the development of Old World culture history, as well.
2. The ancestors of present-day Native Americans probably were not recent men out of Asia taking a one-way trip to North America via the Bering Straits. Populations may have lived in the New World for a far longer period than indicated by our present conservative estimates. Moreover, as Little Turtle suggested in 1798, Homo sapiens could have traveled from America to Asia / or, perhaps, in the widest stretch of the imagination, to the fringes of paleolithic Europe.
3. The Bering Straits hypothesis runs counter to native traditions that view ethnogenesis as autochthonous and assert a past and continuing intimacy with this not-so-New World. Native rejection of the Bering Straits hypothesis involves more than political rhetoric, more than secondary rationalization, and more than the

conscious development of an oppositional ideology. It is a voice that evokes the authenticity, legitimacy, and vitality of native historical traditions. This deserves to be heard and understood in its own terms, with its own inflections, and shades of meaning. It is a voice that we ignore only at the perils of our own ignorance.

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Notes

1. I would like to thank Fred Hoxie and the staff at the Newberry Library, Rayna Green and the people of the National Museum of American History, and Charlotte Heth and members of the U.C.L.A. American Indian Studies Center for being such fine hosts and hostesses. Colin Calloway's Job-like patience in waiting for a final draft of this paper also deserves special acknowledgement.
2. My information on Heiltsuk genres derives from the unpublished research of Michael Harkin.
3. The 'Drive-away' is the local reservation English reference for the forced removal to the Indian Territory in 1838.
4. I am one of a growing minority who believes that some forms of hunting territories and other ideas of resource "ownership" were recognized in pre-Columbian America, and were not simply responses to the fur trade.
5. The preceding account is taken from Graf Volney, Tableau du climat et du sol des Etats-Unis. In his Oeuvres complete, Paris, 1837, Appendix 5, "Observations général sur les Indiens ou sauvages de l'Amerique-Nord," as cited by Werner Müller (1982) and Harvey Lewis Carter (1987:6).
6. The reintroduction of the horse to the New World by the Spanish has been the subject of much scholarship, including Elizabeth

John's paper in this conference. However the abortive effort to bring camels to the Cariboo country of British Columbia to serve as beasts of burden during the Gold Rush in 1862 is less well known. The nasty behavior and potent smell of the camels, plus the fact that their hoofs weren't adapted to the hard-pan of the Frazer Canyon, doomed the experiment to failure. The last camel died in the northern Okanagan in 1905. (Downs, 1960: 39).

7. I read the translated manuscript for a scholarly press and recommended that it be made available to an English-reading audience. As of this writing, I am not sure about the decision. The German title of the work is: Amerika: Die Neue oder die Alte Welt? (1982).
8. Hrdlicka is an easy target for ridicule today, but it must be remembered that he was a superb morphologist for his day. The high scientific standards that he demanded for candidates of great antiquity did much to transform archeology from an area of amateur speculation to a field of professional rigor.
9. My principal source for prehistoric California is Jeffrey Goodman's controversial book, American Genesis (1981). Goodman's thesis that modern man originated in North America parallels the arguments of Werner Müller, but is much more extreme in accepting dubious dates, many of which have subsequently been disproved. Goodman's and Müller's works are independent of each other. I glanced at Goodman's book soon after it was published and only

rediscovered it after this paper was delivered in September 1986  
and substantially completed.

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Appendix: Workshop Reports.

### Workshop I: U.S. History 1600-1865

With Gary Nash at the helm, the members of the workshop wrestled with the problems of achieving a successful integration of Indian history into the standard first semester U.S. history survey course. Discussion focused on the problems of conveying Indian perspectives, the difficulty of adequately attending to the "vertical themes" that run through the course outline, and the task of constructing a syllabus that would offer fresh approaches to the teaching of American history without losing the basic chronological and traditional framework needed to satisfy college administrators, state legislatures and freshman students. The resulting syllabus inevitably is a series of compromises rather than a perfect solution to everyone's concerns. It is designed as a flexible and adaptable framework for anyone interested in integrating Indian history into their teaching of U.S. history, and it is intended to help demolish notions that North America was "discovered" and "settled" by white males intent on creating a new democratic society. The syllabus offers the instructor the opportunity to give balanced treatment to the many strands that make up U.S. history: the experiences of women and blacks, the realities of racism and exploitation, the role of family and religion, and evolving social dynamics, as well as to tell the familiar political story.

Suggested Syllabus for U.S. History I  
1600-1865

I. Three Worlds Before Contact: America Before Columbus  
Africa Before the Slave Trade  
Europe - On the Eve of Expansion

II. First Contacts and Images

III. European Expansion and the Struggle for Dominion:

- Southwest - Hispanic-Indian
- Southeast - Anglo-Indian, Franco-Indian, Hispanic Indian
- Northeast - Anglo-Indian, Franco-Indian
- Northwest - Russo-Indian, Anglo-Indian

IV. Race and Labor Systems: Slave Trade and the Beginnings of Slavery, Servitudes, and Encomienda

V. Evolving Societies: Gender, Economy, Politics and Religion  
Evolution of Afro-American Culture: the Chesapeake, Lower South, and Southwest  
Evolution of Colonizer's Communities: Selected Case Studies

VI. Contexts for Empires: Indians, Europeans and Americans

- Trade, Missions, Diplomacy and War (Pontiac's Rebellion, the Cherokee War 1759-60, Ft. Stanwix)
- Imperial Reorganization
- The Tripartite American Revolution

VII. Consolidation, Confederation and Nation Building

- Creating State Governments
- Making a National Government
- The Age of Indian Confederacy, Afro-Americans and Native Americans under the National Government

VIII. American Expansion and the Struggle for Dominion--the Second Cycle  
Westward Expansion, The First Great Indian Removals, Indian Wars of the Ohio and Mississippi Valleys, Mexican War, etc.

IX. Evolving Societies--the Second Cycle: Gender, Economy, Politics, and Religion: (incl: Revitalization Movements; Indian and White Reform Movements). Regional examples, e.g. the Industrializing North; the King Cotton South, Plains Tribes, the Mining & Ranching West

X. Civil War and Transforming Effects

## Workshop II: U.S. History Since 1865

Discussion at this workshop made it clear that the conference contained a contradiction. The conference addressed the need to integrate the "new" Indian history into the teaching of U.S. history, but for the most part the audience (college teachers of U.S. history) represented traditional approaches to the subject. Thus, while sympathetic to the problem of identifying and assimilating the new scholarship, they were not prepared to tackle it themselves. They weren't the problem, but they weren't the solution either.

The shortcomings of the conference participants were also made evident by the absence of a substantial new literature in Indian history on which to draw for guidance. A great deal has appeared recently to guide the integration effort, but there is only enough work in print to point the way; there isn't enough to provide instructors with a detailed map of how to proceed.

In addition to the shortcomings of both ourselves and the scholarly literature, workshop participants were impressed with the diversity of their students and teaching needs. At one extreme were professors at large universities where the survey curriculum is firmly fixed and the students largely non-Indian, at another were instructors from tribal colleges who have much more of a free hand and who teach students from local Indian community.

Finally, the workshop participants felt that the amount of material--and the amount of information available to students--is so vast for the post Civil War period that it is impossible to "cover" everything. The group despaired at conveying all significant information to students even though there was

Suggested Syllabus for U.S. History I  
1600-1865

I. Three Worlds Before Contact: America Before Columbus  
Africa Before the Slave Trade  
Europe - On the Eve of Expansion

II. First Contacts and Images

III. European Expansion and the Struggle for Dominion:

- Southwest - Hispanic-Indian
- Southeast - Anglo-Indian, Franco-Indian, Hispanic Indian
- Northeast - Anglo-Indian, Franco-Indian
- Northwest - Russo-Indian, Anglo-Indian

IV. Race and Labor Systems: Slave Trade and the Beginnings of Slavery,  
Servitudes, and Encomienda

V. Evolving Societies: Gender, Economy, Politics and Religion  
Evolution of Afro-American Culture: the Chesapeake, Lower South, and  
Southwest  
Evolution of Colonizer's Communities: Selected Case Studies

VI. Contexts for Empires: Indians, Europeans and Americans

- Trade, Missions, Diplomacy and War (Pontiac's Rebellion, the Cherokee War 1759-60, Ft. Stanwix)
- Imperial Reorganization
- The Tripartite American Revolution

VII. Consolidation, Confederation and Nation Building

- Creating State Governments
- Making a National Government
- The Age of Indian Confederacy, Afro-Americans and Native Americans under the National Government

VIII. American Expansion and the Struggle for Dominion--the Second Cycle  
Westward Expansion, The First Great Indian Removals, Indian Wars of the Ohio and Mississippi Valleys, Mexican War, etc.

IX. Evolving Societies--the Second Cycle: Gender, Economy, Politics, and Religion; (incl: Revitalization Movements; Indian and White Reform Movements). Regional examples, e.g. the Industrializing North; the King Cotton South, Plains Tribes, the Mining & Ranching West

X. Civil War and Transforming Effects

tremendous variety in people's opinion about what is possible. Some felt "data" should be ignored in favor of analytical categories; others felt there was a core of information the students should have. These differences related to teaching style as well as to the nature of an individual's institution.

Despite these broad differences, however, the workshop came to two broad conclusions. First, because the amount of information available on the Post Civil War period is so vast, teachers have to tie Indians (or any other group) to broad themes or topics. One participant actually takes her students through the survey text seven times, emphasizing a different theme in each pass. And for each theme, there is some mention or discussion of Indians. Her themes are:

Immigration

Agriculture/Conservation

Business/Labor

Peace and War

Social Change

Civil Rights

Rotating theme reflective of student interests.

During the immigration section, the instructor discusses Indian origins and the contrast of a Native group with an immigrant one. During the conservation section she discusses Indian views of nature; during the business section she describes the shifting role of Indians in the workforce; during the warfare section she discusses the Plains wars; in social change she discusses modern reservation life; and in the civil rights section she covers the Red Power movement.

Other instructors with other needs or students emphasized other topics. Some chose smaller themes--the persistence of ethnic groups, the paradoxical quality of American society (the dialectic between freedom and unfreedom)--others, larger ones. One instructor built his survey around the theme of citizenship--how it was defined through the period, how it was experienced by different groups, and the mechanisms by which it was redefined through time.

The group agreed that themes were vital to the inclusion of material other than politics in the post Civil War survey course. And the group felt that any theme could include Indians.

The second conclusion reached by the group was that comparative discussions of Indians and other minority groups (particularly Blacks) is a very effective technique. To raise these comparisons is difficult because the cases are so often disparate, but they provoke discussion and challenge students' analytical skills. One instructor presented pairs of leaders for research and discussion projects. His were: Charles A. Eastman, and W.E.B. Dubois, D'Arcy McNickle and Martin Luther King, and Vine Deloria, Jr. and Alice Walker. One might imagine others. Another comparison would be possible through film. One instructor showed the "The Birth of a Nation," together with a western or "The End of the Trail." Others suggested comparing the Society of American Indians and the NAACP, Red Power and Black Power, AIM and the Black Panthers, and so on. Yet another suggested a broader project: comparing Blacks and Indians in 1865 and 1985--who had benefited most from modern America and why?

A few instructors favored organizing the entire course around Indian

instructors should identify themes or topics that are broad and can encompass the experience of several groups and that questions focusing on the comparative experience of Indians and others should be raised wherever possible.

The McNickle Center plans to publish a collection of sample syllabi in American Indian History in a forthcoming volume of the Occasional Papers in Curriculum Series.

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